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Graham Parry's *The Golden Age Restor'd* is a distinguished and eloquent survey of the relationship between politics and the literary and visual arts in the reigns of James I and Charles I. A lecturer in English Literature, Parry crosses disciplinary frontiers with unconventional enthusiasm, and controls a wide range of material with notable lucidity and economy. His book has long been needed. Cultural propaganda and patronage, iconography, the iconography of divine-right monarchy: these themes have been brilliantly illuminated by Frances Yates, Stephen Orgel and others, but newcomers to the period are often baffled by them or suppose them to be peripheral to major issues of literary development or political conflict. In Mr Parry, readers will find a courteous and exceptionally helpful guide. Manchester University Press, who have produced the book attractively and illustrated it generously, would perform a service to higher education by putting it into paperback at an accessible price. (They might also, while they were about it, persuade Parry to substitute a more reliable index.)

*The Golden Age Restor'd* was a Twelfth Night Court masque of 1615 by Ben Jonson. Its title, like that of Jonson's later masque *The Fortunate Isles*, recalls a neglected century of early seventeenth-century politics. Parry, viewing the period with one eye on the subsequent Puritan upheaval, too readily forgets the hopes of renewal which attended the accession of the Stuart dynasty and the pacific diplomacy of James I. Solving the succession problem which had so long overshadowed Eng-

lish politics, the Stuarts seemed - and were anxious to be thought - to offer stability and prosperity after the perennial anxieties and the tight-fisted patronage of Elizabeth's reign. England, set apart from the Continent both geographically and historically, could rejoice in its exemption from the Wars of Religion, and in the resilience, the intellectual distinction and the providential mission of its Church.

"And if any nation under heaven", claimed the Court chaplain Joseph Hall in 1613, "could either parallel or second Jerusalem in the favours of God, this poor little island of ours is it." All the rest of the world have been whirled about in these woful tempests; only this island like the centre hath stood unmoved. . . . Whither should we ascribe it, but next under God, to his unimpaired, as a King, as a King of Peace? James, "like milder Augustus, before the second coming of Christ hath becalmed the world, and shut the iron gates of war."

As Tudor iron was transmuted into Stuart gold, nationalist and classical legends - Brutus, the neneit (and now restored) unity of the British Isles, Virgilian prophecy, Astrea, Joseph of Arimathea, the Roman architecture of Arundel Britain - fused in the mythology of the new regime. Ideology was supported by cultural acquisition. The Stuarts, to whom the prestige of their dynasty abroad was at least as important as its reputation at home, competed intensely against rival monarchs in architectural grandeur and in artistic collection. Charles's plan for a vast new Whitehall Palace to match the Escorial and the Louvre was frustrated by financial and political difficulties, but his collection of paintings, as Parry observes, "had an incomparable reputation, outshining the palace galleries of Paris, Madrid, Vienna, Prague and Brussels."

Like many Renaissance monarchs, James wanted to the image of himself as the new Augustus, beneath whose benevolent absolutism learning and the arts would flourish. Jonson quickly established himself as the Horace of the new Augustanism. Inigo Jones as its Vitruvius. Our gen-

eration mistrusts the dedication of the arts to the service of the state; but if Jonson and Jones flattered the Stuarts, they did so, as Jonson believed Horace to have flattered Augustus, on strict ethical terms. One strand of Parry's book is the gradual education of the Court and of the courtly nobility in the classical values, moral and aesthetic, which Jonson and Jones unapologetically preached. Jonson, exploring the tension between courtly service and the virtuous detachment of the Horatian country house, taught his patrons to measure their behaviour against the severity of the antique Roman nobility. Jones's work "was the first to

moments of unintentional high comedy, when elaborately prepared scenes, performed before uncomprehending audiences, were missed or interrupted by a hored or intoxicated James. Not all princely and noble patronage was perceptive or edifying. Whenever art and learning become sources of political prestige, they will attract political patrons whose main concern is self-advertisement - as Parry believes the Duke of Buckingham's to have been, at least until the last years of his life.

Yet if art and learning were exploited, that is a tribute to the value which Stuart society placed upon them, and which made them exploitable. Much has been written about the economic interests and fortunes, and about the political in-lighting, of the early Stuart ruling class, for basic facts of greed and power are comprehensible to every eye. But little has been written about the more elusive (although amply documented) aesthetic and intellectual preoccupations of a worried aristocratic culture, and about the senatorial non-sticism which spread outwards from the Court, often in opposition to courtly policy and manners.



Inigo Jones, from an engraving by Van Dyck.

enable English princes and noblemen to look back across the ages to Rome with an equal eye. . . . In the space of some twenty years, 1620-40, the growing body of Englishmen responsive to the arts became naturalized citizens of a baroque world filled with mythological personages and heroic activity.

Admittedly Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones faced an uphill struggle, even before the famous quarrel between them. The iconography of painting and pageants, and the principles of scenic perspective and of Vitruvian architecture, were not universally appreciated. Jonson's quest "to make the spectators understand" of his Jacobean masques was impeded by

For no adequate account of Jacobean and Caroline politics can evade the questions raised by the discernment, the appetite, and the moral self-examination behind the patronage exercised by Prince Henry, by Arundel, foremost connoisseur and collector of the period, friend of Jones and Rubens and Hollar, patron of the physician William Harvey, of the mathematician William Oughtred, and of the historians William Camden and Henry Spelman. The range of Arundel's interests, which took his agents as far as the Eastern Mediterranean, is well known. Parry brings out the discrimination and expertise which lay behind them, and emphasizes the sophistication of the Earl's concern with the techniques of drawing and with inscriptions on marbles and statues. Arundel was "the forerunner of the great secular-minded aristocrats of the eighteenth century, who conceived that taste, judgement and scholarship are allied to conduct and morality, and who believed that the imaginative control

the Prince of Wales had been a brief golden age." Among Henry's protégés were not only Jonson and Jones but Drayton, Selden, Harrington, Isaac Oliver and Salomon de Caus. There was Chapman, too: as Parry says, "What the translation of the Bible was to King James's Court, the translation of Homer was to Prince Henry's."

The Prince derived much of his patronage from his mother, Anne of Denmark, who initiated the Stuart masques, who gave Jones his first major commissions, and "whose avant-garde taste in the arts ought to be better recognized than it is". Her closest companion was Lucy, Countess of Bedford, the friend of Donne. At Twickenham, where "music flowed through her house", the Countess collected pictures, studied antique coins and medals, provided a resort for the foremost poets of the time, and displayed the "advanced interest in garden design" shared by other leading Stuart patrons. She it was who prompted Florio to translate Montaigne, and she herself made a daring translation of Lucretius, who denied the immortality of the soul. Parry detects "an electric feeling in the air when her name is mentioned", and years for a contemporary account of the conversation which animated her household.

One of Parry's most illuminating chapters is devoted to the Earl of Arundel, foremost connoisseur and collector of the period, friend of Jones and Rubens and Hollar, patron of the physician William Harvey, of the mathematician William Oughtred, and of the historians William Camden and Henry Spelman. The range of Arundel's interests, which took his agents as far as the Eastern Mediterranean, is well known. Parry brings out the discrimination and expertise which lay behind them, and emphasizes the sophistication of the Earl's concern with the techniques of drawing and with inscriptions on marbles and statues. Arundel was "the forerunner of the great secular-minded aristocrats of the eighteenth century, who conceived that taste, judgement and scholarship are allied to conduct and morality, and who believed that the imaginative control

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Huddersfield played in the 1920s, as how Chapman exerted his influence over players. There is little about the private side of Chapman, no doubt because he was a professional footballer. Outside football, he appeared to be very ordinary. Perhaps the effort of getting out and staying out of the working class left no time for the development of personality. Photographs taken shortly before his death in 1934, he looks like a man about to take a long plus-four, but about to take an aeroplane to Paris for a match with the Racing Club. He looks as though he had reached his destination. Football in the end was a vehicle. Asked for his finest hour he chose none of the League championship or FA Cup victories, when Huddersfield and Arsenal were "when my son qualified as a solicitor."

هنا من الأصل



# Non-genetic mutations

By Mary Midgley

E. J. JENSEN and R. HARRÉ  
(Editors)  
The Philosophy of Evolution  
300pp. Brighton: Harvester, £22.50.  
0 7108 0072 X

Is there something which can be called "social evolution" in the strict Darwinian sense – a social process with a mechanism corresponding to genetic mutation and natural selection? An increasing number of social scientists seem at present to assume this with some confidence. They do not just mean that imagery of this sort is sometimes useful, but that the whole set of evolutionary concepts applies as literally and directly – even if with some differences of detail – to social as to biological change.

Now since there are no literal "genes" involved, this is not a true extension of biological theory. It has to be a parallel or metaphor. As such, it has crushing faults, the most serious of which concerns the origin of change. Genetic mutations are essentially random and unintelligible. But in human history, beginnings are not necessarily any harder to understand than middles and ends. There are no hidden entities that must be assumed to account for them: no genes. However sudden and striking a change may be, we can always ask what led up to it and made it necessary, how the need was recognized, what confusions people fell into about it, what materials the innovators used, what kind of appeal the change had for them, and how they thought of it in relation to the possible alternatives. Because people are so interested in changes, there is often plenty of evidence on these points.

Historians therefore get a lot of practice in handling this sort of evidence, and have learnt a good deal about the pitfalls involved. And in fact they succeed in tackling this kind of question as well as any other. Our position inside our own species supplies the materials which they use, and which are denied to the biologist studying remote ones. To reject this material because biologists cannot handle it would be perverse affectation. If we insist on using the model of genetic evolution for human history, our meaning surely can only be that historians have no business to be having this sort of success, and ought in future to stop attempting to explain such cases. Thus we would triumphantly import a load of gratuitous ignorance into history, from an area of biology where that ignorance may anyway be only temporary, since further discoveries may further explain genetic change.

For what advantage is this price paid? Evidently it is conceived as establishing scientific status. As one author in this collection puts it, the question is "how is a scientific sociology possible?" Only, he thinks, by the use of this model. But, seeing its extreme awkwardness, he suggests a number of patches to cover the most obvious holes, and decides that which these are in place, "social evolution" will take on a new meaning, just as "mass" has done in twentieth-century physics. As the model gradually severs its connections with the parent source, and comes to acquire an autonomous life of its own. But why is so obviously faulty a model worth using at all? The point, no doubt, is to bridge the gap between physical science and history by providing history with timeless "universal laws." Repeatedly, people have tried to do this, by extending locally useful generalizations to form such laws, and we are familiar by now with the results they get. Some of the extensions will give us intriguing suggestions, many will be vicious, and some plainly false. History neither needs nor allows such treatment. Its own methods – involving the systematic and disciplined use of mutually correcting analogies – are quite enough to make it scientific in the only sense that matters, namely as a good source of knowledge. Certainly it is not very like physics, but then neither is biology. And the mere appearance of copying a physical science, which the evolutionary model offers, is worth nothing as a mark of scientific method. If sociology wants to tackle change, it has to operate as social history.

The contributors to this book show great care and sensitivity in their attempts to make sense of the model. And that tireless clearing of rebarbative terrain, Rom Harré, shows a sharper consciousness than the rest of the real problems by attacking the gene question directly. He sees that the social analogues of genes cannot possibly be (as Richard Dawkins suggested in *The Selfish Gene*) actual elements in culture, "tunes, ideas, catch-phrases, clothes fashions" and the like, because these are not hidden causes; they are parts of the social phenotype itself. Instead, Harré suggests that they are *rules*. But why assume any hidden entities at all? The case is not like that of unconscious motives, where we already have a good explanatory system, but there are gaps in it and reasons for filling them one way rather than another. Harré is inserting a whole new ontological range. His rules are not just another part of the system of rules which we already follow and express. These expressed rules are not hidden, they too are part of the phenotype. Even rules which we follow unconsciously – for instance, in using language – are still parts of that system. Though unrecognized, they are shown in behaviour. They are not a whole special order of entities, inferred, as genes originally were, simply to explain change. And Harré's rules cannot explain change. For instance, if on the ordinary visible scene of history a new moral or legal rule appears, how will it help our understanding of it to infer a hidden further rule, whose random mutation has given rise to it? This is a dead end for thought. What we would normally do would be to ask what other changes, and what lasting needs, tastes and interests have given rise to the new rule, and by what stages they have done so.

Ways of living and thinking, unlike genes, change gradually and continuously. And though we so often waste our opportunities, there is nothing to stop us keeping track of the whole process. Of course our actual explanations are scrappy, and the hope of something more complete is partly what moves those who want a quite new procedure. But all explanations are incomplete. It is true, too, that there is something specially mysterious about innovation and originality. But this mystery is not the blank, boring unintelligibility of the random. It is the complex, lasting elusiveness of the creative. Many good explanations can be given of such matters, and can instruct us, but they will not satisfy us because we always want more. But that is the reason for rejecting the lot. The inside view which we have of the life of our own species really does give us these extra sources of evidence, and it would be absurd to ignore them.

I am sorry if it seems ungracious to give so much space to this point in reviewing what is actually quite an interesting book, but it could have been so much more interesting if it had not revolved round this axis, and I was so disappointed by this limitation, that a passing howl seems justified. What I hoped for, in a book dealing with the relation between biological and social evolution, was a discussion of the innate bases of culture, and of the way in which biological ways of thinking about our natural tendencies can be combined with the methods of the natural sciences, instead of being taken to com-

pete with them. There are real clashes to be resolved here, and an attempt to find formal parallels is no help for them.

What the book does supply is scrupulous correction of the wider forms of the evolutionary analogy, and serious attempts to make it work. Some of the essays have an extra interest in that they are by Danish scholars, who use great ingenuity in fitting the Darwinist scheme to the Marxist one. There are also some useful discussions of the controversy about "units of selection" in biological evolution, suggesting (surely correctly) that it arises from confusion; there does not have to be just one unit. And the best essays here (by J. Mittelstrasse and W. Newton Smith) concern what may be the only case where the evolutionary analogy has been seriously applied to culture – one where, instructively, it has simply broken down. This is the Poppian

attempt to show the development of science as a pure selection process, among randomly generated hypotheses. No doubt it was worth trying, after the use of much paper and ink, hypotheses do not come out of thin air. Also that, since we have chosen between them ourselves, we do so by using them in the most ways, to call the selection "natural" only encourage laziness, bad taste, confused fatalism. And of these there is enough already.

Should things not stop there? The inertia of such models is frightful. Unless somebody clothes them, they go on absorbing time and energy, and generating PhDs indefinitely. Will somebody with some powers – I would like to say, Rom Harré himself – put forward the suggestion that this emperor has no clothes?

## Ethics for the underdog

By L. W. Sumner

BERNARD E. ROLLIN:  
*Animal Rights and Human Morality*  
182pp. New York: Prometheus Books, \$17.95 (paperback, \$9.95).  
0 87975 164 9

After centuries of malign neglect animals have of late begun to find some philosophical friends. Apart from a few curmudgeons – philosophers are unanimous about nothing – there now exists widespread agreement that sentient animals at least must be included within the moral domain. They are not things which we may manipulate at will for our own purposes; if our dealings with them are to be morally defensible we must acknowledge them as beings whose interests matter in their own right. While the full implications of this conclusion for the many human practices which involve animals remain still to be traced, the moral irrelevance of a creature's species is now as firmly established as the moral irrelevance of its race or sex.

There remain, however, two tasks which philosophers are well qualified to perform. The first lies squarely within their traditional territory. While it may be clear that animals have moral standing, it is less clear why they have this standing (the same is true of many other moral convictions) and also what form this standing takes. Selecting an interpretation of moral standing and constructing an appropriate criterion for it both require a moral theory. The case for extending moral concern to animals will therefore not be intellectually secure until we have such a theory. Only philosophers can provide it.

The other task is advocacy of the cause of animal welfare in the public arena. Effective advocacy requires, among other things, an unflinching case. Philosophers are not the only effective advocates, but their skill at constructing a reasoned argument does confer an advantage on them in this less traditional pursuit. They must, however, be prepared to do their empirical homework, and to tolerate a real world which is a good deal messier than the realms of theory.

Bernard Rollin's *Animal Rights and Human Morality* is intended both as philosophical analysis and as practical advocacy. It is divided into four parts, the first two given to constructing a moral framework which will establish that animals have rights and the last two devoted to applying this framework to the treatment of research animals and household pets.

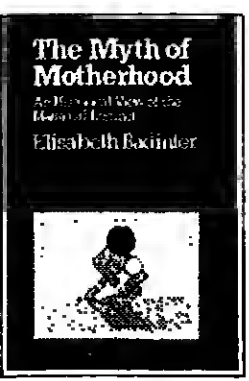

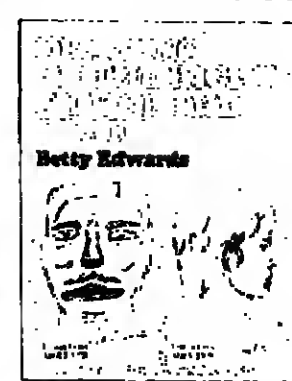
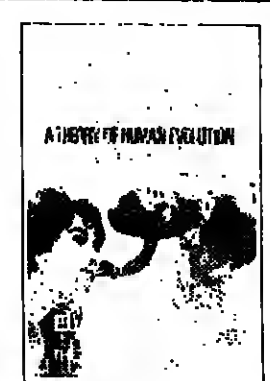
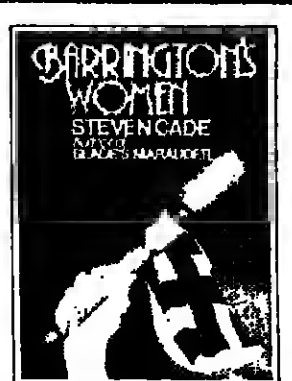

As advocacy the book works well, and it may be unreservedly recommended to non-philosophical readers who wish to clarify their own views on the plight of animals. Its language is by and large non-technical and accessible. Its arguments are efficiently deployed and







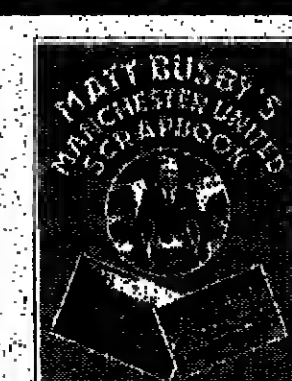
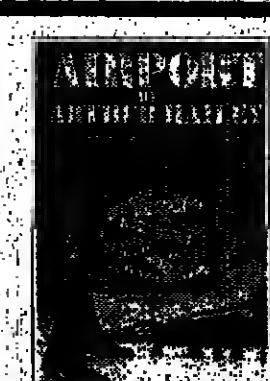
frequently illustrated by examples and anecdotes. The survey of uses of animals in research, the raising of consumables, and the eating of products is comprehensive and illuminating, though also depressing. The book's usefulness as a handbook for successful lobbying is compromised only by its inexcusable lack of an index.


The measures which Rollin proposes for ameliorating the lot of search animals and household pets are refreshingly sensible and well supported. Although they are not recognizes, only minimal standards and thus leave much more to be accomplished, their adoption would greatly reduce the current animal of death and suffering. In the long run quiet and persistent pressure by the adoption of measures which, because they are moderate, are obviously just, will probably do more for the protection of animals than the more vocal and hysterical demands of the lunatic fringe of the animal welfare movement.

Philosophers, however, will find Rollin's theoretical contributions less impressive. The main problem here is the book's central philosophical thesis that animals have rights. Moral rights are one form, or one interpretation, of moral standing. What it is clear that animals have (some form of) moral standing, it is less clear that this fact is well explained (or explained) by attributing rights to them. Imagine any case you please in which an animal is being abused or exploited: readers lacking imagination may consult Rollin's book for abundant examples. You will want to say that this treatment of the animal is wrong, or unjustifiable, or monstrous. Will you also want to say that it violates the animal's rights? You do say this, are you pointing to a further fact which explains why the treatment is wrong? Are you, indeed, pointing to a further fact at all, or simply paraphrasing your original assessment?

In addition to the case for setting animals moral standing, a public case must be made for assigning them rights. Rollin's argument moves much too swiftly from the former claim to the latter, a mistake committed with annoying frequency by American philosophers whose political heritage encourages the assumption that rights are the foundational currency of the moral world. Rollin devotes too little attention to explicating the concept of right for it to be clear whether the concept actually plays any essential role in his arguments (there are some signs that it does not). When we better understand what moral rights are it may well turn out that animals, while they have moral standing, do not have this particular form of standing. If so, then the case for including animals in the moral domain is actually weakened by attributing rights to them. After centuries of understatement of the case, we must resist the temptation to overstate it.



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# The panacea of the poppy

By Alethea Hayter

VIRGINIA BERRIDGE and GRIFFITH EDWARDS

Opium and the People  
Opiate Use in Nineteenth-century England  
370pp. Allen Lane/St Martin's Press.  
£20.  
0 7139 0852 1

"Narcotics have been a scapegoat for wider tensions within society," in this rather awkwardly mixed metaphor the authors of *Opium and the People* outline their theme. The use of opium should be viewed in its social and historical context, as part of the "popular culture" of the deprived working class in nineteenth-century England, condemned to self-medication because it had little access to professional medical help. Present-day legislation, restriction and control of drug use, and the assumptions on which those are based, are a product of special conditions in the last century and are not necessarily of universal application.

In support of this thesis Virginia Berridge (author of seven of the book's eighteen chapters) has undertaken admirably thorough research in chemists' prescription books, medical journals, mortality statistics, import trade returns, records of court proceedings, results of official inquiries and commissions, drafts of legislation — into the supply and demand of opium. Supplies were not only imported from Turkey and Persia, but produced within the country. Opium poppies, indigenous to Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, were cultivated experimentally from Edinburgh to Buckinghamshire, and the cultivation was encouraged by prizes and medals from learned societies. At the beginning of the nineteenth century opium was distributed mainly through little corner-shops of all kinds; it was sold by tailors and basket-makers, bakers and shoe-makers, on market-stalls and in pubs, as well as by chemists. The growth of legislative control of opium use, and the theories and motives of those who advocated or opposed it, are meticulously charted in this study. The fluctuating fortunes of the organizations which, shocked by Britain's opium wars with China to secure Indian opium exports, campaigned to suppress the opium trade are reported in exhaustive detail. On all these points *Opium and the People* will be a rich mine for future surveys of the Victorian social and medical terrain.

Throughout history, and until the middle of the nineteenth century, it is suggested, opium was not merely the doctors' most valued tool, but a normal means of self-medication for the lower classes who could not afford doctors. The dangers of over-dosing were known, but moderate use was taken for granted; there was no "drug problem". Thus regarded, opium may well have been mainly harmless and sometimes even beneficial; it helped overtaxed workers to carry on, its soothing effect on babies not merely enabled their mothers to get on to work and earn much-needed money, but perhaps also eased the babies' digestive complaints caused by poor nutrition. Its widespread traditional use in the Persia demonstrated how a population could succeed in controlling by informal social mechanisms its consumption of the drug, with only minimal medical and legislative intervention. This reassuring picture makes the reader feel that in describing the opium habit, the authors are as he intended, what he was comparing it with, a form of working-class self-help.

In circumstances of hardship and poverty-induced disease, a sensible palliative for the evils inflicted by society — a mild analgesic, rather than an execution of religion.

How then did this self-regulating "popular culture" become the subject of legislation and a moral liability? The authors make the same rather obvious points. Moreover there has always been some question about the

Partly, it is suggested, because it encountered the rising ambition of doctors and pharmacists to establish their professional status by strengthening their control over all forms of medical treatment. It was in their interest to exaggerate the dangers of uncontrolled distribution of drugs. In the last half of the nineteenth century, addition to opium and its derivative morphine began to be considered and treated as a disease, due to hereditary or moral weakness, not simply as a bad habit produced by poor social conditions. Virginia Berridge suggests that this attitude was based on middle-class doctors' experience of well-to-do morphine addicts, not on a real understanding of working-class opium use.

Class-war theories play a considerable part in this study. There are frequent suggestions that opium addiction was condemned in hard-pressed manual labourers but condoned in the leisured classes, and that the condemnation was partly due to "fear of the working classes getting out of hand." Implicit in the campaign against it (the dosing of working-class infants with opium) "was class interest and a desire to remould popular culture into a more acceptable form." The evidence which Virginia Berridge herself provides does not really support the thesis that in opium addiction, too, there was one law for the poor and another for the rich. The public concern which she cites over the deaths of earls, bishops, MPs and other upper-class chemists (including one surgeon meticulously named in the social hierarchy as "nephew of a baron"), either from voluntary addition or from mistaken administration of a drug too readily available in every household, shows that it was not only lower-class opium use that was reprobated. The *Lancet* was particularly severe on its use by idle ladies: "Given a member of the weaker sex of the upper or middle class, enfeebled by a long illness, but selfishly fond of pleasure, and determined to purchase it at any cost, there are the syringe, the bottle, and the measure invitingly to hand, and all so small as to be easily concealed, from the eye of prying domestics." This exquisitely mid-Victorian verbal vignette is wittily reinforced, by an illustration from a French journal showing a sultry lady in a

bustle injecting morphine into her arm, while another crumpled lady is already sprawling in a coma on a padded sofa.

The factual evidence and documentation in this mainly admirable book are perhaps more valuable than the sociological conclusions drawn from them, which sometimes seem rather aridly unrelated to individual human experience. It claims to use "the actual experience of people living at the time", but the experience quoted is mostly that of the suppliers of opium, not of its consumers; we hear little of why the latter took opium, and what it did — or what they thought it did — for them. When, exceptionally, medical records or court cases are quoted, the theoretical analysis suddenly comes alive and the realities of the "popular culture" stand out. Mary Cohen, a Nottingham lace-runner, is advised by her neighbours to give increased doses of laudanum to her four-month-old illegitimate child "to bring it on, as it did other children." Thomas Jones, an inebriate "gentleman's coachman", admitted to King's College Hospital because he sees "devils running about", is treated with porter, beef tea, brandy, and laudanum every three hours. A Fenland doctor, puzzled by a patient's symptoms, is enlightened by an accompanying friend: "Lor, Sir, she has had a shilling's worth of laudanum since yesterday morning." We even meet a canine opium-user: "One surgeon was horrified to find that his dog had swallowed a batch of morphia suppositories made with nutmeg fat". But individual case-histories play little part in this book, which leaves us still unsure of the human motives behind the popular culture.

Those who are interested in the history of opium use chiefly because of its effects on the emotions and the imagination will find little here to enlarge their knowledge; a few references to the euphoric enjoyed by Fenland addicts, one reference to the chapter on "Opiate Use in Literary and Middle-Class Society", mention of the debate whether opium had stimulant as well as sedative effects, and some instances of late nineteenth-century users of cannabis and cocaine, and their enjoyments. The dissipation of misleading myths

about the effects of opium is part of the authors' purpose; for instance, the exotic opium-dens depicted by Dickens and other novelists are downgraded to harmless clubs for Chinese immigrants. Here, too, capitalist hypocrisy is seen tearing its ugly head; "the myth of the opium den was in the wider sense a domestic result of imperialism and the reaction to economic uncertainty"; it was "cultural insensitivity" that made a sinister myth out of "what was in reality only the customary relaxation of Chinese samsoo".

The exaggerated emphasis on class-war attitudes towards opium does not invalidate Virginia Berridge's general theme that our present legislative control over opium use is derived from special nineteenth-century circumstances, and may not hold good to all times and places. A changing climate of opinion is now beginning to make us

see narcotic drugs as a "recreational substance" on a par with alcohol and tobacco, and three substances requiring some control because they are dangerous to health if used in excess, but not so different in kind from each other as to require totally different attitudes and restrictions. Of the evidence of opium use in the nineteenth century and of the subsequent introduction of medical and legislative control, Virginia Berridge concludes against too much restriction. "With opium, a society left to find its natural balances comes to a great harm" and our present system of drug control "has become so frightened and too mechanistic" that this thoughtful work — sometimes obscured by clumsy phrasing or sociological jargon, but for the most part clearly and cogently expressed — an important question has been asked, even if a conclusive answer has not been provided.



Middle-class women morphine addicts, "selfishly fond of pleasure", illustration from Le Petit Journal, reproduced in the book reviewed here.

## A moonlit home

By George Mikes

JANOS KENEDI:  
Do It Yourself  
128pp. Pluto Press. £2.95.  
0 85104 344 8

Anyone worried by moonlighting, tax evasion, bribery and other shady practices prevalent in this country should read Janos Kenedi's book — subtitled *Hungary's Hidden Economy* — where he will find out that we are bungling amateurs and groping beginners compared with the Hungarians.

Kenedi started off as a law-abiding citizen, strongly opposed to all wheeler-dealing methods and finding "fixing" and profiteering morally repellant. When his mother asked him to sell her flat, he conducted the sale with scrupulous honesty, refusing a large sum offered to him under the counter, only to find out that someone else had pocketed the money. The transaction had after all been dishonest, he reflected, but the money had gone to someone else. The moral was clear to Kenedi. He decided to build a house and, by the evidence of this book, proved himself an able, indeed brilliant, student. He says that he learnt more in five months of wheeler-dealing than in five years at university.

The cost of the site was 700,000 forints (roughly £7,000) but, for the purposes of stamp duty, had to appear less. An official valuer came along, Kenedi handed him an envelope, the valuer's practised hand assessed its thickness, and after an inspection lasting less than three minutes, the official fixed the value of the land at 350,000 forints. Then the first blow fell: planning permission was refused by an honest and incorruptible borough architect. This difficulty was easily overcome by the simple device of pebbling a wall on to the plan which — as the less up-

right borough architects knew — would never be built. But it looked all right on the files. After this Kenedi managed to persuade the building society to advance him a large proportion of the full value of the house in cash, and spent part of it on a jeep.

Now the actual building could begin. Kenedi dealt with two groups of people. The first were the moonlighters, who did the building work as a second job, and were cheaper than workers employed by the state-owned enterprises. (Sometimes in fact, managers of state-owned firms were members of moonlighting teams and on occasion even worked under their own subordinates.) But the second group was much more important. These were public employees who could steal building materials from the state. To work

with this second group was cheaper still.

Kenedi got into his stride in no time. Like everybody else, he looked to the black market for his supplies, and disregarded the possibilities of obtaining them in a straightforward way. Which was a pity. He found out, when it was too late, that he could have bought a lorry-load of sand and had it delivered for 750 forints instead of paying double the amount on the black market, with delivery extra.

This, however, was exceptional. You cannot rely in Hungary, Kenedi says, on normal commercial methods. Transport was a major problem but quickly solved. Most lorry-drivers can extra money on "black" deliveries. Their wages are officially fixed at a maximum of 4,000 forints a month (less than £10 a week) but they are determined to earn 10,000 a month (£23 a week). Most employers regard this as a fair claim but the law is the law. So they shut their eyes to these extra journeys and are not too strict about the allocation of petrol. Officially booked deliveries are erratic and expensive, "black" deliveries reliable and cheap.

Indeed, Kenedi was greatly impressed by the honesty and dependability of all these swindlers. They established their own rules and code of conduct and adhered to them more scrupulously than the state-owned firms to official contracts. To survive in the underworld of cheats you must be impeccably honest. Officials and high-ups are fully aware of what is going on. They also realize that the densely low wages have to be supplemented and therefore as long as the cheating is kept within reasonable bounds it is tolerated. In any case, a crackdown on the whole system would create nationwide economic chaos.

The building of Kenedi's house proceeded fast. He needed Hungarian call blocks (whatever they may be) which cost 1,100 forints new and 150

second-hand. For a small consideration a number of new blocks were sold to him as faulty — at an 86 per cent discount. When he went to buy radiators, he was asked whether he was from a public body, and on his reassuring the suppliers that he was a private customer, he was offered all the radiators he wanted. His purchase of a three-piece suite is another instructive tale. He fell in love with the suite and bought it on the spur of the moment for 20,000 forints. The supervisor of the store, in exchange for the usual small envelope, gave him some useful advice. Once he had the furniture at home he discovered some real or imaginary faults in it and took it back to the store, where the supervisor refunded his money without question. The suite was sent back to the return centre for faulty furniture and, thanks to a nod from the supervisor, Kenedi was able to re-purchase it at a quarter of the original price. And so on: today Kenedi is installed in his magnificent new house, built at a bargain price.

He maintains that the whole system is proper and fully justified. All it amounts to, he claims, is "selective distribution". Societies deal with shortages in different ways. Capitalists ration by the purse, which is unfair. Early socialists used to ration by patience, i.e. by queues, which is primitive. Queuing has been abolished in modern Hungary. Hungarians have "circular entities", that is, goods come in through the front door and leave through the back. Besides, the author adds, in a socialist state everything belongs to the citizens so it is no crime to rob the state; it is simply transferring money from one pocket to another.

This revealing and amusing little book was not published in ordinary editions in Hungary ("too negative" said the censors) but enjoyed a wide circulation. It is tolerated. In any case, a crackdown on the whole system would create nationwide economic chaos.

The building of Kenedi's house proceeded fast. He needed Hungarian call blocks (whatever they may be) which cost 1,100 forints new and 150

## Hanging around the house

By Jennifer Uglow

MARILYN RUESCHEMEYER:  
Professional Work and Marriage  
An East-West Comparison  
197pp. Macmillan. £20.  
0 333 30080 7

While much has been written about the sociology of work, and of the family, rather less attention has been devoted to the links between the two worlds, and it is on this changing position and expectations of women, the barriers to their fulfilment at home and at work, and the support provided by institutional structures in the East and by the Women's Movement in the West, that Marilyn Rueschemeyer has centred this study — the latest in a series published by Macmillan in conjunction with St Antony's College, Oxford.

*Professional Work and Marriage* is a vivid excursion into the "concrete experience" of individual professionals, their wives and husbands in America and Eastern Europe. Marilyn Rueschemeyer has chosen to base her work not on a large-scale survey testing pre-formed hypotheses, but on "seventy lengthy, structured interviews, in which she explores the feelings and attitudes of her subjects towards the ways in which personal life in marriage and the family are "affected by pressures of a father and breadwinner, the plugging of the widow and children, the grief over the early death of a child could be softened by the knowledge that a financial burden has been removed as well as by the solutions of religion. In this it is much like *Bread, Knowledge and Freedom*, provides us with a new awareness of historical reality, accepted by the common people.

Not surprisingly, death figures prominently in the autobiographies. Vincent observes that it did not always have the sheltering effect which one imagines it did. The response to bereavement was closely related to the social structure. In the case of a father and breadwinner, the plugging of the widow and children, the grief over the early death of a child could be softened by the knowledge that a financial burden has been removed as well as by the solutions of religion. In this it is much like *Bread, Knowledge and Freedom*, provides us with a new awareness of historical reality, accepted by the common people.

raises problems. This is particularly true of those interviewed from Soviet Russia, chiefly émigré Jews, where the lengthy digression needed to account for specific cultural factors and for what is naively termed "possible bias" casts doubt on the wisdom of using such experience as even a partial basis for a chapter entitled "Does Socialism make a difference?"

The interviews revealed far more ambition and obsession with work in men from single-career families, with correspondingly greater isolation and depression on the part of their wives. Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, the author detects a markedly ambivalent attitude to the husband's career. On the one hand, the wife "resents the time and attention he gives to his work; on the other hand, she has ambitions for his career development which may or may not be realistic and which may prohibit him from having what she would consider an adequate involvement in the family and the marriage. And while she resents being confined to the home she equally dislikes other people suggesting that her domestic activities are not important.

In dual-career families, since wives are not so relegated to a separate sphere, there is more mutual respect and they are less overwhelmed by their husbands' successes and failures, and have less of a feeling of being controlled by forces they can neither understand nor affect. Yet the very success and individual fulfillment which saves them from the trap of the single-career family, can also result in husband and wife, leading separate, parallel lives rather than enjoying collective, shared experience.

Turning to Eastern Europe, the author seeks to contrast the effects of Western individualism with those related to the more collective basis

of work in a socialist economy, which (in a time of labour shortage) accepts women's place in the labour force without question. The introductory chapter provides impressive numerical comparisons: in the USSR women comprise 36 per cent of lawyers, 75 per cent of physicians and 83 per cent of dentists, as opposed to 3.8, 16 and 6.9 per cent respectively in the United Kingdom. These statistics are later set against the actual experience and the conceptions of married couples. Their blunt statements — "In order to feel good, work is important. It is bad to remain at home" — suggest that while expectations may be different in Eastern Europe an egalitarian Utopia is not exactly at hand — "I don't even notice that the dust is around until it gets really bad, but she wants it clean. Those are male-female differences." The conclusion is that such pressures as those produced by collective production conditions of cramped living conditions balance those created by individual responsibility or about anxiety status in the West, and that dual-career families in both societies are burdened by traditional role expectations, especially with regard to child care.

Occasionally *Professional Work and Marriage* reads like a tract in "Save the Family" crusade, as the author attempts to resolve the contradictions between her belief in the importance of female autonomy with an equal attachment to long-lasting, stable marriages as a valuable element in society. She draws up attention to East Germany where institutional and ideological supports may help maintain, even though they cannot create, a combination of independence and freely chosen commitment.

Sociologists estimate that 10 per cent of the women studying at the university decide to have children without marrying. If the woman chooses to divorce or not to marry, she is not isolated. She has her work, she has her colleagues, she has access to *Cribber* for her child; she has the right to an apartment.

Once the stability of marriage is not related to economic dependence its continuation becomes slightly more a matter of free choice. Ms Rueschemeyer is obviously heartened by the "secret commitment" she encounters in Eastern Europe "to retaining the family and participation in a common, shared life."

Whatever one may feel about the virtue of marriage as an institution, this personal note, backed as it is by telling documentation, makes an individual contribution to the debate. At times, the sense of an authorial presence led me to read the book less for its academic than for its autobiographical interest; interviewing friends worked well because of the "possibility of hanging around the house" a bit more; the larger perspective I had on the family... the honesty and effort I expected the women to make. Yet does her circle of friends really include the paranoiac academic? (People drop you because you're not going anywhere in the department), or the appalling doctor who transferred from private to general practice because he disliked being treated like a tradesman, whereas the poor "appreciates me; they're respectful while I'm away in the summer, the loyal once wall, even of some risk to themselves. My patients worry me?"

After exposure to such egomania one can understand her concern to promote "humane, intense, open relations" but one also tends to agree that, with regard to professional work and marriage, "dealing with this tension, intellectually and politically, remains an unfinished task."

## The popular perspective

By J. F. C. Harrison

DAVID VINCENT:  
Bread, Knowledge and Freedom  
A Study of Nineteenth-Century Working-Class Autobiography  
221pp. Europa. £18.  
0 905118 55 3

The self-educated working man is a familiar figure in the nineteenth century. Through their autobiographies the names of William Lovett, Thomas Cooper, Samuel Bamford and a handful of others are well-known to students of the period. For social historians they provide rare evidence of how things looked from the perspective of the common people, a contribution to the difficult problem of history from below. Labour historians have drawn heavily on their accounts of working-class movements from the Corresponding Societies to the natural leaders, the historians of the education have found in them evidence of a tradition of autodidacticism and valuable insights into the "mechanical" Institutes, mutual improvement societies, and popular schooling. All in all we cannot say that the genre has been neglected.

Nevertheless, there have been some recent books which have done so. The end of this particular book is the same: few names are forgotten, but the same rather obvious points. Moreover there has always been some question about the

exact status of these autobiographies as historical evidence. How typical or representative are their authors? How reliable are their statements? Are there many more autobiographies still undiscovered? Leaving aside the political radicals, what is one to make of those neglected apocrypha which were still to be found in second-hand bookshops in Yorkshire in the 1950s — *The Old Soldier* by the Halifax handloom weaver, William Heaton; *Joseph Lawson's Progress in Prison*; *Essays and Poems*, with a brief autobiographical sketch by the Kettering velvet weaver, J. A. Leatherland; *Songs for the Millions* by Benjamin Stott, a Manchester bookbinder — to name but a few that came my way?

David Vincent, who has been studying this type of literature over edited several working-class autobiographies for Europe, has now taken us a big step forward. Using 142 primary working-class autobiographies, covering the period c. 1790-1850, and supported by another eighty titles of associated works by contemporaries, he has vastly extended the range of the material available in this field of social history. Nor is this the full extent of the matter; for, following his lead, it is almost certain that further autobiographies "and to light in local repositories. Readers may also find some of their old favourites (e.g. Joseph Barker, *Leeds*) to add to the list. *Bread, Knowledge and Freedom* (the title comes from Lovett's famous autobiography) consists of three main parts — a discussion of the nature of

working-class autobiography, the working-class family and the pursuit of knowledge — followed by a short study. The overall purpose of the book is to discover how working class men and women understood their lives, "and thereby to reach a better understanding of the working class as a whole during the industrial revolution."

Nineteenth-century working-class autobiographers were able to build on two contrasting traditions of popular expression: the spiritual autobiography, developed during the Civil War period and given a new stimulus by the Methodist revival; and the tradition of oral story-telling which surfaced from time to time in ballads and broadsides. Elements of both these traditions are to be found in the autobiographies. But, Vincent argues, they were now secularized and given literary forms appropriate to early Victorian sensibilities. Above all, in these autobiographies there is a new sense of confidence in their own right and as a section of society with its own distinctive values and aspirations. "Know thyself" was a favourite motto of the Victorians, and not only among phrenologists. It was a point of departure for virtually all the working-class autobiographers.

Probably the most original and valuable sections of the book are the three chapters on the working-class family. This is a topic which is currently of great interest to social historians but on which material is difficult to find. Despite the inevitable reticence and stilted language when writing about emotional and

sexual matters, there are occasional revealing flashes, as when the busy literate farm labourer, James Bow, writes "for I was as fond of my cat as I was of my milk". The family was for the working class something of a contradiction. On the one hand it was the major obstacle to financial security; the constant struggle to feed and clothe a growing family, the cost of childbirth, illnesses and death, and the frequency with which the household was reduced to utter poverty was the tenuous balance of its economy was upset by unexpected misfortune — all come through clearly in the pages of the autobiographies. On the other hand, in times of hardship a workman could find help, both material and emotional, in his family. The intertwining of the economic and affective sides of marriage is apparent in many of the autobiographies, though seldom, alas, in much detail as one could wish.

Not surprisingly, death figures prominently in the autobiographies. Vincent observes that it did not always have the sheltering effect which one imagines it did. The response to bereavement was closely related to the social structure. In the case of a father and breadwinner, the plugging of the widow and children, the grief over the early death of a child could be softened by the knowledge that a financial burden has been removed as well as by the solutions of religion. In this it is much like *Bread, Knowledge and Freedom*, provides us with a new awareness of historical reality, accepted by the common people.

## CORNELL University Press

H.J. Muller is perhaps best known as the Nobel Prize-winning American geneticist who first showed that exposure to radiation will produce mutations in living organisms. He was a man who was admired and honored as well as disliked and mistrusted for his passionate — and always controversial — involvement with the major issues of his time. Genes, Radiation, and Society is the first biography of this remarkable man.



"Unlike some scientists who pursue tranquil lives, Muller was energetic, combative and controversial.... This biography provides a stirring account of his life, and one that asks the reader to enter the scientist's rigorous world for a short course in genetics. It makes for absorbing reading." — *Los Angeles Times* Book Review

"Crispen provides an intimate portrait of Muller's life and work. He has drawn fully on the published writings, a few key interviews, and, most important, the extensive Muller archive of correspondence and manuscripts.... This biography is an important book as well as an absorbing narrative of the life of the father of radiation genetics.... A lucid, at times eloquent, rendering of Muller's remarkable life and of the scientific field he did so much to create." — *Science*

"I have long regarded Muller as the best American biologist of this century and as 'read this quite superb biography with total fascination.' — *James Watson*, winner of the Nobel Prize for Medicine and Physiology

"Should take its place high among the great biographies of modern scientists.... Here is a book that is not only a pleasure to read for its style and its careful, scholarly treatment of a very complex person, but is also a definitive biography of a leader in the biological revolution of modern man." — *The Quarterly Review of Biology*



H.J. Muller (1890-1987)  
**GENES, RADIATION, AND SOCIETY**  
The Life and Work of H.J. Muller  
By ELOP AXEL CARLSON  
With 20 black and white photographs, 20 drawings.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS  
215 House, 37 Cornell Street  
London W1X 4HQ  
H.J. Muller 1890-1987  
New York 10001



# Capitalism and its prospects

By T. W. Hutchison

ARNOLD HEERTJE (Editor):  
Schumpeter's Vision  
Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy  
after 40 years.  
208pp. Eastbourne: Praeger-Holt-  
Saunders. £5.95.  
0 03 060276 9

Joseph Schumpeter and Keynes were the two major economists of their generation. Both were born in 1883 and died shortly after the Second World War. Undoubtedly, with the "Revolution" named after him, Keynes quite overshadowed Schumpeter in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s. Now, in the 1980s, for an allegedly almost chronically cois-ridden subject, perhaps Schumpeter's work, and his style as an economist, have more to offer.

This work falls into three main parts. First, there are his great books on the history and method of economics. Second, there is his work on economic development and cyclical fluctuations, including his much-neglected, largely historical study of *Business Cycles* (1939); and thirdly, there are his writings on Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy beginning with important articles of 1920-24, culminating in his famous book of that title of 1942, and supplemented by further essays in the last years of his life. Though Schumpeter himself referred to his *CSD* as a "paragon", it has been described by a Harvard colleague, Arthur Smithies, as "in some respects . . . his greatest work."

The Dutch private bank, Insinger, Wilms & Co, to celebrate its bicentenary, has sponsored, as a tribute to the world of economics, this volume of essays, in which evaluations are attempted of Schumpeter's ideas and prognosis in his *CSD*, forty years after the book's appearance, and on the eve of Schumpeter's own centenary. Introduced by J. Zijlstra, President of the Nederlandse Bank, the nine distinguished essays, are, in order of appearance, Samuelson, Bottomore, Fellner, Haberler, Heilbroner, Lampson, Smithies, Wiles and Zassenhaus. As Dr Zijlstra claims, this is "an excellent collection of essays about a unique book by an exceptional man." The appetite is whetted rather than fully satisfied, but the volume should render a stimulating service, to this juncture, to "the world of economics."

In his book of 1942, Schumpeter aimed up his argument with brisk, monosyllabic answers to vital problems, notably: "Can Capitalism Survive? No, I do not think it can." "Can Socialism work? Of course it can." All the terms in these two questions, obviously, are dripping

with ambiguity. Nevertheless, it is profoundly valuable when a mind of Schumpeter's quality attempts to answer such spacious questions, however unsatisfactorily they may almost inevitably be formulated. All the contributors to this volume, even the most critical, agree that *CSD* is "a great book" (Wiles), while Heilbroner, who rejects most emphatically Schumpeter's theories and prognoses, maintains that "among the economists of his day, Joseph Alois Schumpeter saw further and more clearly than perhaps any other" (Hayek) would seem to be the only possible rival.)

A single-sentence summary of Schumpeter's main thesis in his writings on *CSD* (quoted by Samuelson) appeared in his *Economic Journal* article of 1928:

Capitalism . . . creates by rationalizing the human mind a mentality and style of life incompatible with its own fundamental conditions, motives and social institutions, and will be changed, although not by economic necessity and probably even at some sacrifice of economic welfare, into an order of things which it will be merely a matter of taste and terminology to call Socialism or not.

Schumpeter discerned some three or four main processes undermining "capitalism" and bringing about its supersession. First, there was the trend to larger and larger scale, originally noticed by Engels, which was supposed to lead eventually to socialization. Secondly, there was a trend to rationalization, "routinization", and bureaucratic management, with an alleged reduction of uncertainty, and an erosion of the innovative, or entrepreneurial function on which "capitalism" essentially depended. Thirdly, there was the decay of vital features of capitalism's social and institutional framework, with the loosening of family ties and inheritance, and the undermining of the concept of property, leading to shorter-term views and a weakening of the drive to accumulate. Next, Schumpeter argued, there is the destructive role of the intellectual, who were created by, and given full rein under "capitalism". Finally, as Smithies summarizes the point: "Capitalistic success has raised the absolute economic position of all classes, particularly labour, agriculture, the aged and the unemployed. This improvement in absolute standards has strengthened the relative political power of those classes vis-à-vis the bourgeoisie, on whom capitalistic success depends."

Schumpeter's theory and forecasts about *CSD* were based on a considerably longer perspective than seems to be recognized in this volume. Samuelson, for example, conjectures correctly that "a 1928 formulation cannot be ruled out". But, in fact, all the main arguments in Schumpeter's theory were

expressed in two or three pieces of 1918-24, in particular in the article "Sozialistische Möglichkeiten von Heute" of 1920. Professor Bottomore, therefore, rather misses the mark in suggesting that, in his emphasis on the role of intellectuals, "Schumpeter was undoubtedly too greatly influenced by the particular circumstances of the 1930s." Whether or not Schumpeter exaggerated the role of intellectuals, he was hardly influenced by the circumstances of the 1930s, either on this point or on any other. In fact, his fiercest denunciation of the *Intellectuals* came in his article of 1920. Moreover, with regard to the great depression of the Thirties, he denied that it signified any break in trend and claimed that its extreme severity was due to unfortunate coincidence. He also completely rejected Keynesian predictions in the 1930s regarding the exhaustion of investment opportunities.

On the other hand, when Wiles registers as his "main complaint" that Schumpeter failed "to spot the military messianism of Russian Marxism-Leninism", he is surely going too far. In the chapter added to the second edition of *CSD* Schumpeter denounced, in the strongest terms, what he regarded as the appalling surrender by the western Allies to Stalin in 1945, and predicted, when the US still possessed a nuclear monopoly, that "Russia will be left undisturbed . . . to construct by far the greatest war machine, absolutely and relatively, the world has ever seen" (as the fruits of socialist planning). Moreover, when Wiles further charges Schumpeter with being "really quite incurious about socialism", it must be remembered that there was virtually only one allegedly "socialist" economy which, in his lifetime, he could have been curious about; and that, in fact, by 1918 onwards, he had repeatedly dismissed the Russian "experiment" as never having been a genuine socialist revolution, at any rate in the Marxian sense — any more than had been the Bela Kun coup in Hungary.

Certainly Schumpeter was open to the counter-criticism of confusion regarding his concept of "socialism", in that, after having defined it in terms of a centrally planned economy, he was reluctant to recognize the Russian revolution as genuinely "socialist". Moreover, he might further be charged with having interpreted Marx too favourably on a fundamental point. For, from 1918 onwards, Schumpeter repeatedly insisted that it was a central Marxist revolution must be "essentially a revolution in the fullness of time", when "capitalism has done its work", in an economically and politically "mature" society. Questionable though this kind of Fabian interpretation of Marx may be, an emphatic rejection is quite in order of Heilbroner's scathing comments on the outmoded quality of Schumpeter's "Marxian scholarship" (with regard to the labour theory of value), "which would not be given serious consideration among Marxian scholars today" — such as the luminaries of "the New Left". For this reviewer Heilbroner's contrast is a lamentable intellectual decline rather than of the alleged "passé" character of Schumpeter's critique of Marx.

For Schumpeter it was Britain which provided the prime example of economic and political maturity, where, in the fullness of time, a kind of evolutionary transition into socialism might take place while preserving democratic freedoms. Through his earlier writings on *CSD* naturally focused primarily on Austria and Germany, and though in his later work the US had a central place, throughout more than three decades the British case held a special fascination for Schumpeter. He had an extensive knowledge of British political and economic history. But he looked at Britain through exquisitely rose-tinted spectacles, acquired, in his visits before 1914, when he had become somewhat of "the superior" of English political society. On England, Schumpeter was always

"imaginative, almost loving", as Zassenhaus puts it.

There is, in this volume, a most interesting essay on Holland, in whose recent history Professor Lampson finds much to confirm Schumpeter's theories. An essay on Schumpeter on *CSD* in England would have been well worth including, but it would have been necessary to touch the confines of absurdity, in 1924, in an article on "Der Sozialismus in England und bei uns", a proclamation that an event of "world historical importance" had just taken place, "far and away the most important fact in the history of our time". This event was none other than the arrival in power of the almost-minority Labour government in Britain. Later he described the second Labour government, of 1929-31, as providing "one of the best performances in the history of democratic politics", while comparing Ramsay MacDonald with Sir Robert Peel.

On the other hand, Schumpeter recognized the serious relative economic decline of Britain as having set in before the end of the nineteenth century. He also saw the very good found significance, both in the mining "capitalism", and as an obstacle to "socialism", of the privileged position conceded to Irish unions in Britain by the Act of 1900. Moreover, in 1938 he went so far as to proclaim that the "English people on the whole have become stale broken by now". But Schumpeter could hardly maintain today that "politically and economically mature transition to socialism is working on in this favourite case of his. Rather, to employ a Keynesian phrase, the process seems to have turned 'sore and silly'."

Perhaps Schumpeter's idea of political and economic "maturity", which renders a country ripe for socialism, represents something of a mirage. He agreed that such a transition would bring a loss in welfare — which he may have considerably underestimated. If the majority of people are never "maturely" ready for the kind of loss, then Schumpeterian-Marxian "maturity" is always receding and never reached. Meanwhile, like the lyricist of "Old Man River", who was "tired of living and fed up of dying", the British people seem to be tired of capitalism and fed up of socialism. Old Man River may oblige by rolling along "into some thing hardly describable as either, but possibly as 'social democracy' (whatever, precisely, that means), or, possibly, as anything from socialism to fascism. For, as Schumpeter concluded, the orthodox socialist dream "was much more likely to present Fascist features. That would be a strange answer to Marx's prayer. But history sometimes indulges in jokes of questionable taste."

Certainly he did not foresee what has become so blindingly clear in the past two decades and is described by Wiles as "the autonomous failure of socialism in all its forms, whether as a practice or as an ideology". The more pertinent question today is: "Can socialism survive?" It is an intriguing spectacle of our time to contemplate the more senior socialist enthusiasts confronted, by this intellectual-moral test, as William Fellner very moderately concludes:

"It would be at least premature, and it may prove a source of grave error, to write off the prospects of socialism. The currents that have been generated in wide circles of the population of advanced industrial nations and that are directed at preventing 'the outcome' Schumpeter predicted in the later part of his life, after all, it is difficult to take a good look at the contemporary world without arriving at the conclusion that the bulk of the population has a vital interest in preventing that outcome."

## FICTION

# Half love, half joke

By Alan Bold

MILAN KUNDERA:  
The Book of Laughter and Forgetting  
228pp. Faber. £7.95.  
0 571 11830 5

That the individual in the twentieth century is subject to guilt-edged insecurity is an assumption which distinguishes the unconsciously "artistic" novel from the popular piece of fiction. It would seem that an exploration of this emotionally supercharged area depends on some knowledge of Continental habits, since, at crucial moments, foreign words like *ennui* and *angst* replace English expressions. The mindless novelist in search of new terms to express the problem of existential identity can relax in the knowledge that the Czechs have a word for it, "*Litost*". Milan Kundera explains, "designates a feeling as infinite as an open accordion, a feeling that is the synthesis of many others: grief, sympathy, remorse, and an indefinable longing. The first syllable, which is long and stressed, sounds like the wail of an abandoned dog. . . *Litost* is a state of torment caused by a sudden insight into one's own miserable self."

Kundera includes this information in "*Litost*", the fifth section of his seven-part sequence (which has been fluently translated from the Czech by Michael Henry Heim). Although the book unfolds in fragments, Kundera insists it is a novel — "This entire book is a novel in the form of variations", he declares. It is a novel in the sense of being an elaborate story, but the complexity has everything to do with cognition and very little to do with character. Stretches of narrative are counterpointed against seemingly autonomous anecdotes and matter-of-fact statements. An erotic scene is liable to dissolve into a discussion of the behaviour of blackbirds.

Kundera is interested in establishing contrasts in order to confront the reader with a choice because, like the student hero of "*Litost*", he sees "the world as divided into two: half love, half joke." Kundera's sense

of humour is sometimes surrealistic, sometimes deadly serious. In "*Litost*" the student has to choose between an evening with the woman he desires and a meeting with the great poet he adores. The woman is Kristyna, a butcher's wife in her thirties; the poet is Goethe, who is dining at the Prague Writers' Club with Lermontov, Voltaire, Petrarch, Verlaine, Boccaccio, Yesenin "and several others not particularly worth mentioning". Encouraged by Kristyna, the student goes to meet Goethe who eventually sends him back to the woman, and to sexual frustration. The student therefore achieves little, though he emerges wiser for the experience.

Laughter, Kundera suggests, is both subversive and irresponsible. According to him, the book together with the key image of the border and decorates it with the leit-motif of vulnerability. Given the existence of limits, of the border, the individual has to choose to respect it or go beyond it. In fact Kundera remembers his own decision to go beyond the border. In 1969, when the Russians brought Husak to power, the Czech people experienced "a massacre of culture and thought". Kundera lost his professional post and became "a banned author." "I held out a few years," Kundera recalls, "and then got into my car and drove as far west as I could, to the Breton town of Rennes, where the very first day I found an apartment on the top floor of the tallest high-rise. When the sun woke me the next morning, I realized that its large picture windows faced east, toward Prague."

In other words Kundera's own decision indirectly involved the political destiny of his country. Having escaped he had to live with his *Litost* intact; what he left behind was a bundle of memories he has attempted to gather together in this book. In the fiction Kundera's autobiographical aspects — assaults would be a better word — are used to disturb the flow of the narrative. He uses alienation-effects to unsettle the reader, and to emphasize that the novel (or at least this novel in particular) has a didactic function which transcends the obligations of storytelling. Kundera is anxious about what he has left behind, about what aspect of

him remains in Prague. For he is painfully aware of the impermanence of emotion, even if recorded mechanically. The book opens with an image of loss through erasure. In 1948 Klement Gottwald was photographed in Prague's Old Town Square alongside various colleagues, including Clementis. When, subsequently, Clementis was hanged for treason he had to be eliminated from history to prevent his photograph being contaminated by his photographic proximity. It was a simple matter: "The propaganda section immediately air-brushed him out of history." Towards the end of the book, Kundera has another reference to the unreliability of the camera when a character is conditioned to regard his lover in these terms: "The motions of her body seemed to set a large reel of film rolling, and her face was the television screen the film was projected onto."

Kundera's own vision is, despite the clever technical apparatus displayed in his novel, anything but mechanical. As he watches his characters he is reminded that for "eight years my country has been throwing in the sweet, strong embrace of the Russian empire" and longs to be closer to his creations; fortunately "the tear in my eye magnifies like the lens of a telescope and brings their faces closer." By such intrusions the author makes his ideological intentions clear. He is convinced that the individual is too vulnerable to hold out alone against totalitarian institutions. If one takes flight then one deprives those left behind of the support necessary for survival.

In the final section of the book, "The Border", Jan is "overwhelmed by the vague and mysterious idea of the border". He is about to leave for America, and takes his girlfriend to a nudist beach. He suddenly succumbs to the thought that "the Jews had fled into Hitler's gas chambers naked and on mass". His shocked reaction-effects to unsettle the reader, and to emphasize that the novel (or at least this novel in particular) has a didactic function which transcends the obligations of storytelling. Kundera is anxious about what he has left behind, about what aspect of

him so that for days all he hears is the soft tinkling of her earrings. Driven by passion, he secures Jadowaker's imprisonment on a minor charge, and possesses Euphemie for a few blissful months — until the arrival of Sameschkin, her secondary lover (it is typical of Kundera that the unsatisfactory annual salary of this migrant should appear utterly binding, while the marriage-contract itself is invariably broken). Eubenschtz takes to drink, and when Jadowaker escapes from prison to murder him, one almost feels he is doing him a favour.

Roth's view of life is understandably dark. Not unlike Kafka, he describes a man trying to assert himself, working for a moderate happiness, but his life is entirely dictated to him by some hostile force. *Weights and Measures* is written with simplification. The joyful, the ironic, the irrational, the malicious, all find a place in this narrative. "Three days later his wife was confined. In the kitchen. It was an easy birth. No sooner had the midwife been called than he arrived, the son of Josef Novak. Inspector Eubenschtz reflected that only bastards come into the world so quickly and easily." The book abounds in memorable scenes: the virulent green of Regina's knitting, the small pleasures of a community of cheats, the homesick bar-lads that the Russian deserters sing as soon as they have crossed the border. David Le Vay has translated this spare and eloquent writer faithfully and well. On a couple of occasions he follows him into recognizable Germanisms ("abandoned by God and the world" and "strike everything out"), but these are only indications of his closeness to the original.

# Ire in the soul

By Patricia Craig

ROY BRADFORD:  
The Last Ditch  
263pp. Blackstaff Press. £3.95 (paperback).  
0 85640 239 1

It was William of Orange who offered to die in the last ditch rather than witness his country's humiliation: a fine gesture exemplifying the spirit of intemperance revered by Northern Irish adherents to the loyalist cause. That this particular piece of defiance was addressed to the English is a matter of no significance at all for those without the will to relish historical ironies. These are plentiful enough in Ulster's history, but are often rejected out of hand. Roy Bradford, in this novel, records the slaying, by a outraged Protestant, of a contemporary painting which associated Pope Alexander VIII with William's celebrated victory at the Boyne — an historically truthful representation, but one which is all the same shocking in terms of the Protestant myth.

A politician's novel about politics is, at the very least, likely to prove informative about the processes of government, and the stratagems which continuous self-promotion entails ("Every cabinet discussion was a thinly disguised battle for supremacy"); and Roy Bradford, an ex-Minister in the Stormont Government, provides an authoritative account of the uncertainties, intrigue and realignments of political life. He makes Ministers' speeches sound authentic enough. But direct transaction does not always make for satisfactory fiction. Politicians' jargon — dilemmas, tight-rope, losing all credibility, deteriorating situations, lustric fringes, and so on — is all very well; but these phrases come as naturally to the author of *The Last Ditch* as they do to his characters. You look in vain for a trace of the ironic detachment that can make such expressions memorable and entertaining. A political theme, too, quite often glibly in effectiveness from satirical, quizzical or allegorical treatment; but Roy Bradford has chosen to keep to a strictly documentary narrative — apart from a sensational and somewhat distasteful opening chapter, and some rather novelistic love scenes. He has altered the characters of the leading players, naturally enough, and tampered with the sequence of events (cutting out the whole business of the power-sharing Executive, for example); but basically *The Last Ditch* recreates the troubled period just before the Loyalist Strike of 1974.

Bradford's central character, Desmond Carson, Minister of Home Affairs, has not his career in jeopardy by tampering with a Catholic civil servant, called Joseph Scanlon (who owes her place at Stormont Castle to a belated, half-hearted reformist impulse within the Unionist hierarchy). What these two feel for one another, or so the author would have us believe, is bigger than both of them — bigger too than the ancestral burden of puritan scruples which often besets the wily adulterer in Northern Ireland. Catholic or Protestant, it makes no difference. Carson, momentarily overthrown by the old gull complex, the old sense of sin, wonders "Could he hope to have luck?" Perhaps it's not by accident that Jo Scanlon, suffering a similar misgiving at the same time, uses the same words to express it: "How could she hope to have luck?"

Without the prospect of good fortune, then, the egregious twosome makes the most of present delights: gazing and coupling (sometimes the two activities seem to be taking place simultaneously). Jo's thoughts, fortunately not presented in detail, are surrounded by a terrible sense of futility drama — the "easiest option", perhaps, for an author who cannot do better, to make his characters illuminating or even consistent. Jo, we're told, was educated at an English convent and then at Sussex University, yet it was at school that she met the Minister of Home Affairs.

The Sinclair Prize for Fiction, worth £5,000, is a possible publication by Sinclair Browne. It is offered to "any writer of fiction, social or political theme. Manuscripts should be submitted to The National Book League, 45 East Hill, London SW3 8JF. The prize will be awarded to the best work published in 1981."

a moment of levity, calls "the hated Saxon oppressor". At school in Anco? This girl, the only notable female character in the book, is also the only Catholic with anything like a substantial speaking part. Two members of what I take to be the SDLP do make an appearance, it's true, but their only purpose seems to be to hinder up Her Majesty's Representative in Northern Ireland, a person of facile liberal views which predispose him to sympathize with the disaffected. His name is clear: Oliver or Nigel Birch; it is not clear which.

The crux of the novel is a constitutional crisis. Westminster has decreed that the cherished B-Special police force should be disbanded; can Stormont, to avert an outcry, twist the edict to make it appear that the Specials are being upgraded instead? Rumour, high feelings and apprehensions are against them. The rumour, the die-hards, Unionist agitators, fundamentalist Christians, unthinking Orangemen, all those for whom even the mildest reform was a betrayal of the Protestant cause, quickly make plans to bring the province to a standstill — striking while the loyalist ire is hot.

Seamus Heaney's "civilized outrage" and the reservations underlying it, find a cruder counterpart in one of Desmond Carson's observations: "the whole battery of pious condemnation was brought into public play when the private armies brought off some deadly exploit, but secretly there was barely concealed satisfaction that 'our boys' could give those Republican bastards as good as they got." Inbred resentments and intractable convictions persist on both sides, often against all reason: it's to Bradford's credit that he has identified some of these. It is almost beyond belief — but still believable — that Carson should think of Jo Scanlon as "an exotic creature", "from a different tribe", merely because she's a Northern Irish Catholic. Of course, she is female as well, and this defies her role quite clearly in Carson's view (and, I am afraid, the author's): there was nothing like a woman to unbend the mind.

Strict fairness might slight disfigure for the more overt forms of tribal bigotry bring Carson as close as he gets to a liberalist perspective. These, and the other implications, are recently acquired characteristics. At heart, he remains an extremist, an opponent, a tough administrator. Bradford is certainly at his best — at his most assured and fluent, that is — when he deals with Cabinet meetings, with UDF truculence and with the bustle and harassment of government offices, all of which lend themselves to a downright, pedestrian style. Occasionally, however, some startling figures are pressed into Bradford's unequivocal prose: "The grass roots would murder him", as well as mixed metaphors ("He saw himself as the catalyst bringing the most disparate elements together in search of the elusive 'common ground'; 'He'd take the bull by the horns . . . Let them know he wasn't a sitting duck'; that nearly rival Sir Boyle Roche's (minimogified rat 'I smell a rat: I see it floating in the air before me. But mark me, Sir, I will nip it in the bud') — a classic of oratorical infelicity).

There are many opulent interiors, and — for contrast — one or two journeys through the rainy, desolated city, but Bradford shows little susceptibility to atmosphere; action in the political sphere is what engages his interest. *The Last Ditch* is properly cynical about the tactics involved in the pursuit of power, and knowledgeable about the many ill-mannered can take in Ulster. Its matters of style, and historical insight, though, it has less to offer (considering the richness of the material it deals with) than you might expect.

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### Authenticating the poet

By Valentine Cunningham

What Makes Rabbit Run?

BBC TV

The tones of this most watchable fiftieth birthday tribute to John Updike are magnificently decorous. They never even itch to rise toward the unseemly. Low voiced relations, quiet readings from the softly-spoken novelist, a silent second wife, all imply a civilisedness glad of being in far cry from the loudly uncouth urbs and from pushiness of all sorts.

The tulling acoustic torpor nukes, though, a startling background for the storm-warring intensities of normal vocabulary that those quiet voices keep on quite naturally reaching for. Updike's publisher holds out "goodies" in the shape of new editions and such. "I need goodies," Updike warns. "More goodies," he says, opening his maw. He's "a good person," asseverates Linda Updike, his white-haired mom. He "throws light" in a dark world; he tells the truth. It's "good to be alive," says the man about himself, and he talks much of experiences being nice, of diligence and fulfilling tasks, of recognizing temptations to badness - "We too are warped by the Fall," Godlines and goodness, the "chain" of Lutheran "faith", are seen to hold him in a marvelously rendered network of familial piety. In a snapshot his father, who "taught me how to be a man, an American male citizen", who transmitted joy, licks his boy close. The grown man, his mother's "special", "luminous" child, who constantly returns home to fix the yard and do the heavy farm chores, wobbles up a ladder to attach the maternal storm-windows, eat his mother's peanuts in her kitchen, promises to be measured for a new flower. "See you at Thanksgiving," he says as he leaves, both nice and good.

But nothing is that simple, especially not with a novelist who insists as much as Updike does on the meritorious pieties of dull, ordinary, average American life. (We see him in his childhood *Hallowe'en* gear, hear him and nittens every reunion). "I'm inclined to be dull," declares Linda, but not too believably. Dullness is an uninviting condition to remain in, as Updike himself concedes. All the edulcorous coupling in the "unbearable dullness" of middle-American life. Just so, he himself has escaped from an ordinary Christianity: his Religion must cohabit intriguingly with Art and Sex. His poem entitled "Fellatio" (It has silver genital allos as well as eager secretaries in it) is brought on to illuminate "the kind of Christian I am". It refuses to be nice and rebuts the conventionally good. Grey-haired, grey-jacketed Updike is; but grey he is not.

In fact the programme's devoted decorum is unable to prevent it from nudging into the evident Updike contradictions. He's in flight from New York; prefers craftsmanship to the city's hyping about (of which this show coinciding with the publication of *Rabbit Rich* is a part). He dislikes writers as a subject, but he keeps projecting himself in the person of his double; Angstrom. And such narcissistic self-regard is never more glaringly evident than here. Updike reads, for example, from the text of "Of the Farm", sitting by a shelf of copies of his published texts, in the very farm-house room he is celebrating, while the camera picks out reading, decibels. Such moments are windows, as we hear his voice reading windows. "The Melancholy of Storm-lark" (as he calls it) is also a performance. And very little in Updike's life is allowed to evade its potential for performance. Even the vegetation. We see a lot of the dogwood planted

at his birth in his parents' yard. It's a beautiful tree, and a touchstone of childhood memory. "In a sense" it is "me". As such, it's been made to perform before, in the fine childhood memoir "The Dogwood Tree", and it is made to do its stuff again and again here. It must have struck Updike early that his dogwood would make a wonderful opportunity for an attention-getting poet-authenticating revised version of the already famous dogwood in Eliot's "Gerontion".

Amid all this conscious self-arrangement, this self-mythicalization doubled and redoubled, talk of satisfying ordinariness sounds a bit hollow.

### Sweating it out

By Richard Combs

Body Heat

Warner West End Cinema, ABC Cinema, Fulham Road

"My whole history's burning up out there," comments the hero of *Body Heat*, watching a pinkish pall of smoke that drifts rather cosmetically out of the film's opening titles and is a tantalizing remark, suggesting a hero still involved with his history, for good or ill, a suffering witness to a world going up in flames. Subsequently, there are many other pointers to the amount of heat the film is supposedly giving off, the trial by fire that is about to be conducted.

Characters are forever complaining about the sweltering climate in the small Florida town where the action takes place; a cop testifies to the craziness that comes over ordinary people in such conditions. But as restlessly as the camera prowls through this demi-monde, the temperature of *Body Heat* remains obstinately low, the film fatally involved with its own characters.

Take, for instance, the history of its hero, lawyer Ned Racine (William Hurt). After that opening reflection, it is never again referred to, except insofar as his past failures as a lawyer are eventually exploited in the web of conspiracy woven round him by Matty Walker (Kathleen Turner).

### A score of sources

By Paul Driver

Punch and Judy  
Opera Factory, Drill Hall, Chertsey Street, London WC1

Harrison Birtwistle's opera *Punch and Judy*, acquired a sort of classic status soon after its first performance at the 1968 Aldeburgh Festival, but David Freeman's production for the English National Opera's experimental "Opera Factory" is only its third production. The reason it has had to wait fourteen years for its present tangible success is that although many people have struck the score (Britten, however, was driven out of the Jubilee Hall by it), almost nobody had a good word for Stephen Pruslin's dense libretto (Auden was one of the few who did). How could such a pretentious tissue of riddles, allusions and puns, it was felt, possibly accord with a musical approach and dramatic donnée of such violent straightforwardness? The piece was put aside.

In fact the libretto is one of the best ever devised for a composer. Without, as he has said, close discussions of the Strauss-Hoff-

low. Nor can the goodness of consuming others as fiction fodder be taken simply as read. Old Mrs Updike doesn't mind being used, she says and the interviewer doesn't press her. But Updike's son David's about as he - oh - eventually - as it were - brings himself to kind of admit that - ah - he wouldn't hurry to follow his father in putting painful things about friends and relations into his own writing. And the first Mrs Updike is not even present, let alone asked for her views.

"I kept on", runs one of Updike's

recollections of childhood, "shilly-shallying the passive and infuriating figure of my father"; it was "a kind of ritual, for both of us, and he had endured my screams completely, nodding assent, like a middle-aged family ritual, yes; even a kind of pride, maybe; but actual complicity? This superb programme, moving about family rituals and pride, is distinguished not least for inciting us, in its own mild and discreet fashion, to wonder a lot about Updike's fiction loves to fall, as well as about the morality of such falling.

*Body Heat* is a film that struts much more than it steams. Ultimately it is an exercise in applied movie-going, with a plot deliberately designed to evoke such antecedents as *Double Indemnity*, dialogue that crackles in the meat to touch on collective memory but not to call up any individual response of their own. This is film-making in the Brian De Palma school and writer-director Lawrence Kasdan proves efficient at whipping up the kind of plot that grips an audience because he knows exactly what nerves to play on.

Kasdan sharpened his craft as a writer on *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and although *Body Heat* pretends to be much more sophisticated, it works as much the same kind of fantasy machine. It does invite audience complicity, not with the characters but with the film-maker. It demands our willingness to be hooked by the same old devices, a co-operation which Kasdan earns by proving he can serve them up with such brio, such an excess of style, and of course the morsels of sex. Contemporary relevance is otherwise wholly lacking: for all that it takes of the present, *Body Heat* might as well have been made in the past. Occasionally, its pastiche of the noir style of heavily shadowed lighting and threatening angles trembles on the brink of parody - witness the outworn audiences the liberality of laughing at it. In the cinema of excess and indulgence alienation is an unprofitable effect.

there in the background, but the foreground is a two-tier children's playroom featuring a swing incessantly and immotely used by Pretty Polly and a slide for despatching the dead. The six characters double the roles of dancers to advantage. The action is relentless - much, cheerful knocking around of toys and even a see-saw - and on the whole well co-ordinated. Occasionally it is imperfectly focused: would the libretto-less have grasped the particularities of Punch's quest for Polly? But that is begging the question of how much the opera also loses when it is staged. It makes an excellent piece of "invisible theatre".

The Endymion Ensemble brush away the difficulties of the score, demonstrating not only its muscularity and intermittent lyricism but also how beautifully composed in every sense it is. Graham, Titus and Omar Ebrahim as Chores and Punch did sterling work. Hilary Western's Judy was rich-voiced, while Marie Angel, as Pretty Polly, pluck top notes in the concluding "Spring has come, and with purity and ease fit to scatter any notions that there has been a triumph of evil. *Punch and Judy* is a solitary in twentieth-century opera. It is the opera Auden should have achieved. He once sought Birtwistle as collaborator, and never did.

Freeman's production is vivid and brzen and it cuts a few comars, the resulting smoothness is ample gain. The traditional *mise en scene* is

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Kasdan sharpened his craft as a writer on *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and although *Body Heat* pretends to be much more sophisticated, it works as much the same kind of fantasy machine. It does invite audience complicity, not with the characters but with the film-maker. It demands our willingness to be hooked by the same old devices, a co-operation which Kasdan earns by proving he can serve them up with such brio, such an excess of style, and of course the morsels of sex. Contemporary relevance is otherwise wholly lacking: for all that it takes of the present, *Body Heat* might as well have been made in the past. Occasionally, its pastiche of the noir style of heavily shadowed lighting and threatening angles trembles on the brink of parody - witness the outworn audiences the liberality of laughing at it. In the cinema of excess and indulgence alienation is an unprofitable effect.

there in the background, but the foreground is a two-tier children's playroom featuring a swing incessantly and immotely used by Pretty Polly and a slide for despatching the dead. The six characters double the roles of dancers to advantage. The action is relentless - much, cheerful knocking around of toys and even a see-saw - and on the whole well co-ordinated. Occasionally it is imperfectly focused: would the libretto-less have grasped the particularities of Punch's quest for Polly? But that is begging the question of how much the opera also loses when it is staged. It makes an excellent piece of "invisible theatre".

The Endymion Ensemble brush away the difficulties of the score, demonstrating not only its muscularity and intermittent lyricism but also how beautifully composed in every sense it is. Graham, Titus and Omar Ebrahim as Chores and Punch did sterling work. Hilary Western's Judy was rich-voiced, while Marie Angel, as Pretty Polly, pluck top notes in the concluding "Spring has come, and with purity and ease fit to scatter any notions that there has been a triumph of evil. *Punch and Judy* is a solitary in twentieth-century opera. It is the opera Auden should have achieved. He once sought Birtwistle as collaborator, and never did.

Freeman's production is vivid and brzen and it cuts a few comars, the resulting smoothness is ample gain. The traditional *mise en scene* is

## commentary

### The shoutmost shoviality

By Richard Brown

James Joyce may not have had much of an appetite to celebrate his twenty-fifth birthday. On February 2, 1907 he was nearing the end of a miserable stint as a bank clerk in Rome, trying to support a common-law wife, an eighteen-month-old son and with another baby on the way, still hoping to find time to write. It is true that he had just signed a contract with Elkin Matthews to bring out a volume of his verse - but it was a volume that was never to bring him any royalties. He had also an agreement from Grant Richards to publish his volume of short stories, *Dubliners*, but he was already one year into a long discussion with Richards about the form that publication should take. Richards and his printers objected to works like "shilly-shally" and to a description of a girl who "changed the position of her legs often" and these, and other problems, were to delay the eventual publication of the book until 1914.

Joyce was a poor man at the gate of literary fame and he had no way of knowing that the walls were ever to crumble before him. But by his fiftieth birthday he had become one of the best known literary figures in Europe. He had *Ulysses* behind him, which was not legally available in Britain or America but was nevertheless widely discussed and had sold more than 28,000 copies. He was already the subject of two biographies; he was a familiar figure in the literary and gossip columns of the newspapers; and he was nine years into his new project which was one of the most ambitious and original writings in a time when spectacular experiment could be seen on all sides. When *transit* magazine, in which his "Work in Progress" was appearing, wanted to mark "James Joyce at the Half Century", it was not just a birthday party that they had in mind, but a "homage" by writers like Stuart Gilbert, Gogarty and Louis Gillet, which included Céline's well-known caricature of Joyce in the shape of a question mark and C. K. Ogden's translation of "Anon Livia Plurabelle" into his simplified language, "Basic English".

Joyce didn't live to see his seventy-fifth birthday. By 1957 his memory and his surviving works were at the centre of a great posthumous celebration. In that year the first volume of his letters was issued, edited by Stuart Gilbert, and in America the *James Joyce Review*, a periodical entirely devoted to articles on Joyce's work, was founded. Joyce could not celebrate but Joyceans did, and there was, among other parties, an anniversary dinner held at the Kensington Restaurant in London, whose guest of honour was Joyce's indefatigable patron, Harriet Shaw Weaver, and which was attended by representatives from Joyce's publishers and such figures as Anthony Powell and Osbert Lancaster.

Few at that gathering could have foreseen the scale of the Joycean enterprise by the century of Joyce's birth. There are now three periodicals which deal exclusively with Joyce - the *James Joyce Quarterly*, *A Wake Newsletter* and the *James Joyce Broadsheet*. Joyceana meet every other year on an international scale at the Joyce Foundation's regular Symposium. And in the off years they may get together anywhere from Dubrovnik to Albuquerque (the sites of the two main conferences in 1981). Nearly 6,000 items of Joycean criticism were recorded in the new bibliography produced by Robert Deming in 1977. There is a massive sixty-three volume publication of all of Joyce's manuscripts, drafts, notebooks and proofs, which is available to the serious student at \$4,500; and an ambitious project is under way to identify and eliminate the thousands of typographical errors that are known to have accumulated in all the published versions of *Ulysses*.

Now, therefore, I, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, do hereby proclaim February 2nd as "James Joyce Day" in Washington DC and call upon all our residents to join with me in honouring James Joyce in grateful acknowledgement of the extraordinarily outstanding contribution which he made to his fellow citizens and to all humanity.

Exceptionally outstanding? The mind boggles at the superlatives that will be needed. If all this continues, Dreadful visions of the future appear, with twenty-four-hour, all-night radio stations broadcasting only *Ulysses*, *Wake* and Chinese-style wall-posters proclaiming the Joycean Revolution.

"Scotch please, plenty of water," is the grim cry of Derek Mahon's "The Cry of the Irishman". "I am reading Joyce in Braille and it's killing me."

Plus for the centenary year are correspondingly extensive. The James Joyce Foundation is holding its Symposium in Dublin from June 14-19. There will be about seventy-five seminars of an academic kind and lectures by illustrious Joyce experts like Richard Ellmann, Hugh Kenner and Walton Litz. The Joycean side-shows sound far more ambitious than in previous years and include a full-scale re-enactment of the "Wandering Rocks" episode of *Ulysses*, masterminded by Denis Rose and including 150 participants and a vice-regal coach. Tom Stoppard, Anthony Burgess, Denis Potter and William Empson are among those participants promised by the organizers and the whole circus will culminate, as on previous years, with a "Bloomsday Banquet".

It was to be expected that the committed, largely American, Joyce Foundation and the Irish Tourist Board, would mount a large event of this kind, but the number of other academic and cultural celebrations taking place this February may be a surprise to many people. University College London offers a centenary lecture (February 2), a theatre performance at the Colgate Theatre (February 4 and 6) and an exhibition, continuing throughout February, which displays some of the holdings of the James Joyce Centre, including early editions and association copies, items from the materials that Harriet Shaw Weaver collected concerning Joyce, and some notable items of Joyce criticism. London also marks the occasion with a series of Joyce films at the National Film Theatre (presented on February 1 and 2) and a one day programme on February 12 at the Polytechnic of North London.

Elsewhere in England there is a series of lectures co-ordinated by Lancaster College of Adult Education. Especially interesting, though, is the weekend conference at Leeds University entitled "James Joyce and Modern Literature" to be held on April 2-4. There is an excellent programme on offer including Frederic Jameson from Yale speaking on "Ulysses in History" and readings by Seamus Heaney and Tom Paulin.

Conferences and activities are planned in Trieste, (where a bronze bust of Joyce has been unveiled), in Rome, in Copenhagen and in Tokyo. In Beirut, a commemorative week supported by the American University and the Irish Embassy there, proudly boasts in its programme of "Centenary Message" written by Samuel Beckett which reads: "I welcome this occasion to: bow once again, before I go, deep down, before his heroic work, heroic being."

Radio Telefís Éirann produced a two-hour-long television documentary on Joyce for the centenary on February 2 and they promise, for "Bloomsday" in June, an unedited and uninterrupted reading of *Ulysses* on radio.

Few could surpass the grandiloquence of the Mayor of Washington who has pronounced:

Now, therefore, I, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, do hereby proclaim February 2nd as "James Joyce Day" in Washington DC and call upon all our residents to join with me in honouring James Joyce in grateful acknowledgement of the extraordinarily outstanding contribution which he made to his fellow citizens and to all humanity.



Ego and alter ego. Joyce had a compulsive need to find likenesses between himself and other people. A fine slinger himself, he became obsessed with the promotion of the Irish tenor, John Sullivan (shown seated here) who he felt had suffered unjustified rebuffs in his profession as Joyce had in his own - he addressed a tribute to Sullivan "From a Damned Writer to a Banned Slinger". "Since I came to Paris," he remarked, "I have been introduced to a great number of recognized geniuses in literature, music, painting and sculpture; for all these persons are quite sympathetic and friendly, but they are all, for me, perhaps, there is no perhaps about Sullivan's voice."

### Writing against oblivion

By Michael Mason

James Joyce: A Touch of the Artist  
BBC Radio 3

Matters of origin, youthful background, career, personality, and so forth - biographical matters, in short - are inseparable from James Joyce's reputation not just because they figure largely in his work. That work, although strongly autobiographical, is also restrictively so. It was necessary in addition that the life should have shape and meaning in its own right, or give the impression of this. Joyce's term "exile", for example, was a way of conferring these qualities on the general fact of his residence in continental Europe, a fact never represented in the autobiographical fiction.

The biographical vein has always been conspicuous in writing and talk about Joyce. While he was still in his forties no less than three lives of Joyce (by Gorman, Gilbert, and Louis Golding) were under discussion, at Joyce's own prompting. Published controversy about Joyce's life started, or surfaced, within months of his death. People have always remained about Joyce, intimately. Sometimes they have done so on the radio, and James Joyce: A Touch of the Artist continued the tradition: with some fresh recollections from such Parisian acquaintances as Maria Jolas and Jacques Benoit-Méchin. This is an area full of danger: people reminding about Joyce have sometimes made mistakes that stagger credulity. Oliver St John Gogarty's remarks about Joyce's life are as notable for their ludicrous inaccuracy as much as for their malice.

The inclusion of a brief extract from Gogarty was the only important blemish in the programme; however, Craig Raine put together a series of contributions from friends of Joyce, critics; and, most prominently, certain contemporary writers: Updike, Heaney, McEwan, and some others. The critics went on a little too much about Joyce as a moralist, perhaps, but the balance was redressed by the writers, who naturally put an

emphasis on his towering technical gifts. Updike spoke of the satisfaction which a phrase such as "the felly harshed against the curbstone" gives, and Seamus Heaney described the opening chapters of *Ulysses* with extraordinary eloquence - under the rubric that they were "much better than most verse". After this, anecdotes about whether Joyce approved of Molly Bloom seemed, though relevant to Joyce, a good deal less relevant to the question of his greatness: Ian McEwan sustained the subject of morals, it is true, but he spoke inwardly, as a writer, about the moral countenance of some of the *Dubliners* stories. On "Counterparts" he was especially penetrating.

But the critical heart of the programme came with Craig Raine's remarks on Joyce and "oblivion". He connected such things as the end of "The Dead" and Joyce's minute enquiries about the Dublin of his youth... The idea that Joyce's art seeks to counter time's snow-like obliteration of individual human lives, "writing against oblivion" in Raine's phrase, was fresh and profound - and also highly apt. For the fuss about the centenary took on a new aspect, as a token of Joyce's success in resisting obliteration in his own case. Western culture has a soft spot for Joyce, as Greta Conroy had for Michael Furey. We are all "great with him".

As a sound presentation the programme was peculiar. There was a certain use of music, but of such a timid, occasional, and puzzling sort that it sometimes seemed a bit like interference from another station. The readings were odd; Joyce passages were, delivered in a growly voice quite unlike his own, and Ezra Pound, mysteriously, was privileged with an impersonation of his manner by Craig Raine himself whenever he was quoted. But programmes of this type aspire to the condition of writing, and do not stand or fall by their success as radio productions. Indeed the main test of their value is whether they surround the fact of their aural transience and are worth recording and transcribing. The contributions of the writers interviewed alone were enough to give this programme permanent interest.

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#### Oxford University Press



# An old-fashioned radical: Richard Ellmann and Craig Raine on James Joyce

In preparing his BBC Radio 3 programme *James Joyce: A Touch of the Artist* (reviewed on page 135), which was produced by Judith Blum, and broadcast last week for the centenary of Joyce's birth, Craig Raine recorded an interview with Richard Ellmann, who has been working on a revised edition of his biography of Joyce, to be published this autumn by OUP. The following transcript of parts of the interview which were not broadcast is printed by kind permission of the BBC.

Professor Ellmann began by discussing some new information which has come to light about Joyce's personal life and about certain aspects of his work. Information which will not be published until the book appears. The conversation turned to Ellmann's views, now, about Joyce "as a person", and to questions about Joyce's dealings with contemporary writers and influence on later ones, and about his politics.

Ellmann: In going over these pages in order to make insertions and corrections, I found all my old affection for Joyce renewed. I'm quite aware that he was far from a perfect person. I don't think he would particularly have wanted to be perfect. He asks, as Pausanias asks - who is good? And it's clear that there's no answer to that question. But at the same time, I think that on the whole Joyce was, in my opinion, good in the sense of humanity, decent, and that he tried to be helpful. He would always lend money if he could to needy friends. He tried to help Jewish refugees to get out of Nazi Germany, to get settled elsewhere. He was always worried about his friends' illnesses, about their children, took a great interest in all that. He confided all his woes to them too, but he was willing to listen to theirs as well. I think on the whole that he was a rather decent man, as he thought himself to be.

Raine: It's my impression, reading your edition of Joyce's letters, that a change takes place in him. Early on, he's actually a very ruthless character indeed, even where his family are concerned. He writes to Stanislaus (this is 1905) "I will make everything and everybody stand out of my way, no I did before now." Later in the same year, in December, he writes to his Aunt Josephine that he's thinking of leaving Bonn. He says: "Nora does not seem to make much difference between me and the rest of the men she has known, and I can hardly believe that she is justified in this." And he projects the possibility that he will in fact leave her. Of course he didn't.

What do you think changed in Joyce to make him this more generous person? And, in fact, really abjectly vicious by the end of his life? Ellmann: I think it was always present in him. When he asked Nora Bernadine to go off to Europe with him without being married, he wrote her a very honest letter, explaining the risks he was running and making clear what his views were; why he couldn't marry her, because he didn't believe in marriage. And I believe that he was always considerate of the feelings of other people, although I grant you that there is an element of ruthlessness which was no doubt induced partly by poverty, and partly by his sense of the necessity to leave Ireland and to become his own man. I suppose that it was always mixed, but he was obviously always tender towards his mother. No doubt he told her things that she disapproved of, but it was a way of being close to her, even if she was upset by them. And he was close to his father, in a peculiar way, throughout. His father always knew that he could write him and get a little money from him, and there is even a late letter which I found, written shortly before his father's death, where Joyce replies to his request for money, and explains why he can only send a moderate amount.

I think he was always eager to be generous, but prevented sometimes by

circumstances from being so, and no doubt at moments aware of the necessity for being hard, if he was to continue his career at all.

Raine: Yes, I think that's obviously true, especially about his mother. As we read about his refusal to kneel at her deathbed in *Ulysses*, for instance, it looks as though Stephen has actually been very cold indeed - Stephen at this point representing Joseph. Then, if we go back to which don't survive into *A Portrait of the Artist* is a section where he has ment with his mother, where he teases her, he mocks her. And there's a curious sense in which reading that one thinks that they were very close indeed. It's a paradox but I think true. Rather as John Osborne writes about his mother in an acrimonious way and yet you can sense a profound bond coming through it. If they didn't feel so deeply they wouldn't care enough to be angry.

Can I turn to Joyce and his friends? You've mentioned lots of chinties. The one I remember from your biography is the hundred crowns Joyce gets together in a whips-round for the painter Silvestri; and one thinks of his encouragement of italo Svevo. But there is an egoistic single-mindedness I think in Joyce the artist. For instance he never, ever, praises any of the contemporaries - the distinguished contemporaries - who helped him. Pound is the most notable example. Pound is another. Not a word of praise passes his lips. And I notice that when Svevo's widow writes to Joyce, asking him for a preface to *Senilità*, he refuses, good-humouredly. But there's a sense in which I think he realized that Svevo had hit the big time, that he was a potential competitor, and therefore wouldn't help him at all. Do you think this is true? Ellmann: No, no, I wouldn't say so. As far as Pound was concerned, there are some new letters which have turned up from Joyce to Pound which indicate that he made at least passes at praise of Pound. I think that he did the best he could and spoke of the youthful vigour and other qualities that he did feel in Pound and which he could respect.

As to Eliot, there was a period when he didn't really think Eliot was a poet. But then, when he read *The Waste Land* he suddenly realized that he was.

Raine: What's the evidence for that? The only comment that Joyce made on *The Waste Land* is the very funny parody he wrote. Ellmann: Yes - of course that's a form of respect, I suppose. But a woman did say to him, "Well, I can't understand *The Waste Land*." And Joyce said "Do you have to understand it?" I once had a chance to tell this to Eliot, who was very much pleased by this response, and obviously would have made it himself. I think that Joyce had only a moderate respect for Eliot, but he had some respect for him. As for italo Svevo, I don't think one can complain that he didn't do enough for him. He actually got Valery Larbaud to read Svevo, encouraged the critic to write fulsomely about him. And in every way that I can think of, he was very generous to him. There were various reasons why he didn't want to appear as a man of letters, partly I suppose because all French men are men of letters, they're always writing prefaces to other people's books, and I think he wanted to be different from that. It may be a form of egotism; I wouldn't deny Joyce's egotism. But I think it was not so reprehensible as you were making out.

Raine: Eliot said "When a great poet has lived, certain things have been done once and for all and cannot be achieved again. But on the other hand, every great poet adds out of his own complexity material which, if we apply this to Joyce,

would you say that his work has been a literary cul-de-sac? That, say, *Ulysses* can't be imitated any more than *Tristram Shandy*? Or do you think that his work has been a strong and useful influence, and if so on whom?"

Ellmann: Well, that's a large question. But I think I would have to say that Joyce seems to me the most radical writer of the century. By that I mean that he's down at the unconscious, including the roots of art, and also at the roots of language. We all assume, or would like to assume, that language is fixed and stable, but in fact of course it's very fluid and Joyce is the first, I think, to make this clear. Now as far as his experiments in language are concerned, there haven't been many people who have followed those, though one finds bits of *Finnegans Wake* in Sean O'Casey's autobiography. So far as his development of consciousness, his exploration of everyone seems to be following him in that. And so far as his exploration of the roots of art and his experiments with all kinds of different narrative points-of-view, unreliable narrators and the like are concerned, everybody seems to be following him too. So I would say that he's been a very important influence, that that is one of the signs of his greatness as perhaps the principal innovator in twentieth-century literature and perhaps in the literature of a much longer period than that.

Raine: What you're suggesting is a general diffusion. Ellmann: Yes. But I would be willing to name more specific instances too, if you want those.

Raine: Well I wondered, for instance - one can obviously pick out small things: the O'Casey you've mentioned; Orwell, absolutely totally my view, copies the "Circé" episode in *A Clergyman's Daughter* and never tries it again - but I was thinking of someone like Nabokov, who seems to me to bear the imprint of Joyce's influence. There are some very clear verbal parallels. This is from *Invitation*: "She lit up" - a cigarette - and the smoke she exhaled from her nostrils was like a pair of tucks. "In 'Circé', one of the whorers spoke 'watus smoke' through her nostrils, exactly the same image. Do you think Nabokov is influenced by Joyce?"

Ellmann: I'm sure he was, and we've recently had a book of his lectures on Joyce which he gave at Cornell. The book which seems closest to Joyce is *Pale Fire*, where the character of Kinbote, who is an opposition between Kinbote and Shade is very Joycean, very much reminiscent of the "Cyclops" episode. Kinbote is a thorough-going villain and this is never made clear because we hear it always from his point of view, just as we hear it all from Therapist's point of view in the "Cyclops" chapter.

There are some rather pleasant incidents of their friendship - because they did know each other. Perhaps the most telling one is that Nabokov once had to give a lecture on Proust, and he knew that there would be no audience whatsoever, which the Hungarian football team, which was visiting, was forcing to attend. But when he went to speak at the hall, finding that it would be otherwise entirely empty, he saw that one at least of the seats was occupied by the principal writer of his time who had come, feeling sympathetic to his situation and wanting him not to be left all alone in this lecture hall.

You know, as far as the question of influence is concerned, I am always amused when Anthony Burgess talks about Joyce, because he always insists that Joyce has had no influence whatsoever. But one has only to look at *Invitation*, or any other of Burgess's novels, and he always turns out to be full of Joyce. I don't mean that Burgess doesn't have his own flair, but he certainly has read Joyce carefully.

Raine: We agree about this, that Joyce's influence is everywhere. Yet oddly, Joyce himself didn't think of himself as a pattern-book for other writers. There's a letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver, in 1919. He says "Each successive episode dealing - rhetoric or music or dialectic - leaves behind it a burnt-up field. Since I wrote 'Sirens' I find it impossible to listen to music of any kind." So he really thought of himself as exhausting a particular patch. But I don't think he did.

Ellmann: Music has probably survived him, yes.

Raine: What about his politics? In 1915, Pound writes to Joyce - they're talking about the possible publication of *Portrait of the Artist* - "It would be better if possible to publish in England. France is very much occupied with the War, news of which may have reached you." This kind of thing seems to be the received idea about Joyce and politics, that he was absolutely uninterested in politics. Frank Budgen says that Joyce never talked politics. And when you look at the books - you look at *Ulysses* and the Russian-Japanese War gets two mentions, I think, in the entire work. There isn't much to build on. But "Ivy Day in the Committee Room" in *Dubliners* dismisses the idea of politics, really. It's for sentimentalists.

There's nothing in the work itself, the texts as they stand, to build a great theory of Joyce's politics on, but what about the letters? Is there more evidence which has come to light there?

Ellmann: There is some evidence in the letters, and I think there is a little in the books too. Joyce undoubtedly disapproved of the excessive nationalism that he saw so popular in Ireland at the time. On the other hand, he was a nationalist in his fashion. And at the end of *A Portrait of the Artist*, you remember, Stephen Dedalus says, "I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated consciousness of my race." And earlier in the book, he asks how can he touch the hearts and minds of young Irish women so that they'll bring forth a race less ignoble than their own. It seems to me that a great deal of his work is directed towards an improvement of the Irish situation.

Raine: But that's only political in the most elastic sense, isn't it? I mean if you go to the *Portrait*, Davin's sentimental attraction to Fenianism, for instance, is dismissed out of hand. McCann's petition for peace, Stephen won't sign it. Basically what he's doing in *A Portrait* is opting out of all commitment except this very, very large one. And would it be really true to say that that's political?

Ellmann: Well, one can define politics in many ways. Clearly it did mean voting. I don't suppose Joyce ever voted in an election. He couldn't have voted after he left Ireland. And he probably didn't vote in the year or two when he might have voted there. But on the other hand, as we learn from "Ivy Day in the Committee Room", voting was practically useless in Ireland at that time. It was one of those waterheads when nothing was happening in the country.

Joyce undoubtedly was much moved by the death of Parnell when he was a child. And he has a moving description of Parnellites and anti-Parnellites in the Christmas Dinner scene of *A Portrait of the Artist*. In *Ulysses* he goes to the next stage, which I suppose is the question of ultra-nationalism, and he's very much against that. On the other hand, there is one Irish leader of that period, of the post-Parnellite great, Robert Emmet, who speaks of with great respect, repeatedly in *Ulysses*, and that is Arthur Griffith. Griffith became President of the Irish Free State in 1922, the first President, and Joyce felt that there was some sort

of conjunction between their careers, in that Griffith was attempting to do by cultural means what Joyce was attempting to do by cultural means. Then of course he became somewhat less pleased with the government. Griffith died, and it became repressive in its turn. In 1930 Joyce commented that the new state appeared to reduce individual liberty even further than had been done under the British occupation, and there certainly hadn't been much individual liberty at that time.

But I like to remember that in 1914, just after the War was declared, Joyce decided that he would put together a group of seven articles which he wrote for the *Irish Times* newspaper, the *Piccolo della Sera*, Home Rule and about John O'Leary, the old Fenian, and related subjects. And he said to this Italian publisher in Rome, "I would like to publish these. I think that while they have no literary value whatsoever, they give a full picture of the situation and it is just at the moment when Ireland is coming into the news." The book was not published, but it seems to me a pity it wasn't, because it would have shown that Joyce was interested in the future of his country in a very particular way and was quite well informed about it.

I think he started out as a socialist - he called himself that - and gradually he became an anarchist. He began to disapprove of all governments increasingly as he got older. But he says retained a political feeling in that he was always for the Blooms of the world, the simple people, always for individual liberty, always very much against tyranny, always contemptuous of Hitler and Mussolini and always eager to do what he could to help refugees from Nazi Germany.

Raine: So it's really the personal life he believes in. There's actually a very useful quotation which sums up what you've been saying. This is a letter to Stanislaus in 1907 in which he says that he's lost all interest in socialism: "Yet I have certain ideal I would like to give form to. Not as a doctrine, but as a continuation of the expression of myself, which I now see I began in *Chamber Music*. These ideas, or instincts, or intuitions, or impulses, may be purely personal. I have no wish to codify myself as an anarchist or socialist or reactionary."

Ellmann: Yes, I think, though, that there are other remarks which indicate that he recognized that to be totally oblivious to politics would be a defect. I remember one letter in which he says that the thing which distinguishes Turgenev from lesser writers in Russia is his political awareness. And I think Joyce felt that he had political awareness, even though he was not active in politics in the way that we expect people to be in our present-day political scene.

One of the many books published to coincide with the James Joyce centenary is *James Joyce's Odyssey* by Frank Delaney (1929p, Hodder and Stoughton, £8.95, 0 340 26885 9), a re-creation of James Joyce's city of 1904. The author maintains that because it escaped destruction in the Second World War, Dublin is, unlike most European cities, very much as it was at the beginning of the century. The book is divided into eight chapters, each corresponding to the episodes of *Ulysses*, and each chapter follows the routes of the novel's principal characters. The *James Joyce's Odyssey* is illustrated throughout by maps, street plans, archival pictures and photographs specially taken for the book by Jorge Lewinski.

The February 1982 issue of the *James Joyce Broadsheet* (annual subscription £5 in Europe, £4.50 or £10 overseas, James Joyce Centre, University College, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT) contains a supplement which gives details of the events planned for the centenary in seven countries.

## Georg Lukács

Sir, - I have a great admiration for Georg Lukács, especially for his erudition, his intellectual generosity, and the lucidity of his prose. Normally I would not dream of challenging one of his articles, especially one dealing with a subject of which I am almost totally ignorant. But the issues he raises in his discussion of Georg Lukács (January 22) are so important that I find I cannot keep silent when it seems to me that Dr Steiner is going wrong.

Does he quite realize the effect his review can create in the mind of a detached reader? I note that, as usual, he puts the facts and the possible interpretations of the case fairly before us, and few, I imagine, will want to controvert much of what he says. But in his desire to be fair to Lukács, in rescue some shred of claim for his greatness, for his standing as a teacher, he makes some fearful concessions; concessions which we of the liberal persuasion (to use Dr Steiner's own phrase) cannot afford and must not allow to go unchallenged.

The case of Lukács, as it emerges from Dr Steiner's account, is commonplace in our appalling times. A towering vanity, nourished by the knowledge that he possessed great gifts, and shielded from reality by the dreadful propensity to abstraction of the German philosophical tradition, made him for most of his life, indeed to the time of his very death, the accomplice and spoliator of some of the worst criminals of our age. Set against such a monstrous perversion of the soul and the intellect his various literary achievements - shrewd comment on Thomas Mann, a revaluation of Walter Scott (as if Scott, in any significant sense, needed his services) - are seen to be utterly unimportant, except to those corrupted like himself. Yet this is the man whose rebuke of the West, of America, of "technocratic capitalism", Dr Steiner seems to endorse. This is the man whose excuses for his own misconduct Dr Steiner allows to pass unrefuted.

What strikes me, as a historian, about Lukács, as presented by Georg Steiner, is his intolerable presumption. "Could anyone except Stalin have withstood the terrible impact of German invasion..."? The question cannot be answered. But what can be shown is that without Stalin's murderous paranoia and his fatuous trust in Hitler the invasion could have been far more successfully resisted; and your own pages (I refer to Kyril Fitz-Lyon's review in the same issue of Nikolai Tolstoy's book, *Stalin's Secret War*) show what was the manner in which Stalin conducted the subsequent war and, in Lukács's complacent view, made of backward Russia one of the world's two super-powers. Lukács was one of those who justified the incredible suffering which Stalin and the CPSU inflicted on the Russian people by a suppression of some of the truth and a perversion of the rest. If this is not *trahison des clercs*, what is? The same hateful trait is detectable in his question (I paraphrase), "Do we not accept the judicial murders of the Girondins, Danton and Robespierre as necessary crises in the ultimately humane logic and libertarian dynamics of the French Revolution?" No, Sir, "we" do not. We do not pretend to know what is "necessary", and our conscience is too intelligent to allow us to acquiesce in human suffering in the present because some dialectician says that all will be well in the future.

Does all this matter? Yes it does. Lukács, in Dr Steiner's presentation of him, embodies the fatuous arrogance of the intelligentsia which has done so much harm. It is astounding that Lukács should condemn Western liberal intellectuals to a future as a *behageliche Leerlauf*. He wanted to be a big wheel, and despised those in the West who were more humble and more honest in their aspirations. He was profoundly anti-democratic and anti-human (his truly redempting

grace seems to have been that he was also, in his conduct, profoundly inconsistent). He is an awful warning which, in an era when on both Right and Left, but particularly on the Right, I once more hear the trumpeting of doctrinaire absolutism, should be presented as such. I deeply regret that Dr Steiner, who is of course anything but an ideologue himself, could not quite bring himself to do the job.

HUGH BRIGGAN,  
University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, Essex.

## 'The Dirty Bits'

Sir, - In his entertaining review of *The Dirty Bits* (January 22) Gavin Ewart seems to have got it slightly wrong about Aubrey. "Manuscriptation" is a fine word but is not what Aubrey wrote - at least according to Oliver Lawson Dick's 1949 edition. In "A Private Essay only" Aubrey set out his characteristically odd views on education. He says, for example, that scholars should not be beaten about the head: thumbscrews were a better punishment. Swiss, Dutch and Scottish boys made good pupils, but apparently attempts at teaching French boys are a waste of time: "like the shearing of Hoggies they make a great crie and little wool: their mindeas do chiefly run on the propagation of their race." In this respect the French seem merely to be more precocious than the lads of some of the worst criminals of our age. Set against such a monstrous perversion of the soul and the intellect his various literary achievements - shrewd comment on Thomas Mann, a revaluation of Walter Scott (as if Scott, in any significant sense, needed his services) - are seen to be utterly unimportant, except to those corrupted like himself. Yet this is the man whose rebuke of the West, of America, of "technocratic capitalism", Dr Steiner seems to endorse. This is the man whose excuses for his own misconduct Dr Steiner allows to pass unrefuted.

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HUGH BRIGGAN,  
University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, Essex.

## Dostoevsky and the Jews

Sir, - I am happy that Joseph L. Whelan (Letters, January 15) concurs with the main point I made in reviewing David Goldstein's *Dostoevsky and the Jews* (July 1) - that there is an essential difference between the political polemicist and the novelist in Dostoevsky. What surprises me is his confidence that the love of the Girondins, Danton and Robespierre as necessary crises in the ultimately humane logic and libertarian dynamics of the French Revolution? No, Sir, "we" do not. We do not pretend to know what is "necessary", and our conscience is too intelligent to allow us to acquiesce in human suffering in the present because some dialectician says that all will be well in the future.

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## 'Language of the Underworld'

Sir, - Anthony Burgess, in his review (January 22) of David W. Maurer's *Language of the Underworld*, points out that "China Street pig" meant a Bow Street runner in the late eighteenth century. In Pierce Egan's *Life in London* (1821), "pig" is defined as "thief-taker". It would be interesting to know whether the word vanished from London usage until re-imported from the United States in the 1960s, or continued to have a subterranean life all the time.

KATHLEEN ADAMS,  
71 Stepping Stone Road, Coventry CV5 8JT.

## Camus and War Crimes

Sir, - Robert Boyers in his review (January 15) of *The Intellectual Resistance in Europe*, by James D. Wilkinson, dishonours the memory of Camus in accepting what is apparently Wilkinson's view that he "threw his weight on the side of the avengers" in the punishment of war crimes in 1945.

Personally I am all for punishing war crimes whoever commits them, winners or losers; treason is another matter. But in the circumstances of 1945, Camus, in January of that year, signed the petition to save the life of Robert Brasillach, a notorious fascist. De Gaulle rejected the petition. On a later occasion, when Céline wanted to return to France, Camus wrote that "political justice demands me". We should honour him for saying that.

PETER LEVI,  
Austria Farm, Stonedfield, Gxford.

## Marcel Proust

Sir, - Phyllis Grosskurth's review of my book *Proust and the Art of Love* (June 12) has just come to my attention. I am pleased with the favourable treatment of the book but notice several factual errors in the review. I would like to correct the most important of these.

Phyllis Grosskurth discusses my book along with two others: Bernard Strauss's *The Maladies of Marcel Proust* and Randolph Spittler's *Proust's Recherche*. About midway through the review we are told that Spittler's book, though it does not explain "the mystery of genius" possibly explains how a genius utilizes his suffering. And the review continues: "As Spittler says, 'The pages of writing are the suffering, but they are also the means of banishing the suffering. They are, to borrow a central paradox from Proust's descriptions of love, the sickness and the cure.'" This quotation is not from Spittler but from my book *Proust and the Art of Love*, where it occurs on page 96.

J. E. RIVERS,  
Box 4248, Boulder, Colorado 80306.

## Alliance of Literary Societies

Sir, - Eight years ago, the George Eliot Fellowship took the lead in the formation of the Alliance of Literary Societies, an association whose fourteen members were willing to come to the aid of other member societies should a building, etc with literary associations be threatened by demolition or damaging change.

Recently, the Fellowship has had reason to call on the Alliance, and were so impressed by the value of having friends at such a time of

threat that we decided that the Alliance must be enlarged. All those literary societies of whose existence we knew were invited to join, and I am pleased to tell you that only a very small handful have not replied. The Alliance, therefore, now has twenty-eight members who are willing to add their voice to any protest which is considered necessary by any of our members. We now feel we are a powerful and persuasive voice in the cause of preservation.

KATHLEEN ADAMS,  
71 Stepping Stone Road, Coventry CV5 8JT.

## 'The Princess'

Sir, - Tennyson did indeed write "Rhodope, that built the pyramid" (*The Princess* II, 68), and his editors have retained his spelling. As a serious student of his classics, he may well have remembered that Herodotus calls her "Rhodopis", as George Huxley (Letters, December 18) points out. Tennyson's own gloss, first published in the *Eversley Edition* of his works (1907-8), explains why he calls her "Rhodope": he was alluding to *Henry VI*, vi, 21-2, "A steeper pyramid for I'll rear / Than Rhodope's of Memphis ever was".

I leave it to an editor of Shakespeare to explain that poet's spelling.

SUSAN SHATTO,  
University of Edinburgh, Department of English Literature, 5 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh EH8 9JX.

## Information, please

*Irish Migrants in Britain 1780s-1920s*: any references in private papers or in family tradition, for a critical period were published in 1983, official, party political, or church attitudes.

L. W. Brady,  
Department of Social Studies, Liverpool Polytechnic, Walton House, 52 Tithebarn Street, Liverpool L2 2NG.

*Edward Johnston (1872-1944)*, calligrapher: whereabouts of any surviving copies of the dust-jackets of the novels *The Narrow World* (1930) and *Great Girl* (1932), both by his daughter, Priscilla Johnston; or other similar ephemeral material; for a bibliography.

Justin Howes,  
21 Clarendon Gardens, London SE21 7BE.

*Umericki*: examples of the form which have not previously appeared in anthologies; in particular, Umericks dealing with contemporary figures, characters from fiction or mythology, and poems, plays and novels; for a new collection to be published by Penguin Books in 1983; payment will be made for any material included.

E. G. Parrott,  
PO Box No 389, St John's Wood SDO, Lodge Road, London NW8.

*Séverine (Caroline Rémy Ghephard) 1855-1929*: journalist, feminist, critic, revolutionary; letters, books, personal or professional reminiscences sought for a research study.

Susan Torow,  
Department of Romance Studies, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853-0197.

*Oscar Wilde*: any information concerning Wilde's period in prison, especially relating to his efforts to petition the Home Secretary for early release, medical, and psychiatric reports, letters etc; for a study.

Michael A. P. Shortland,  
Department of Philosophy, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9TT.

## Margaret Kennedy

Sir, - Having seen a notice under "Information, please" (December 25) from Margaret Keith of Ontario, concerning a projected biography and new edition of the works of the late Margaret Kennedy, I hope it may help to prevent confusion if I confirm the fact, stated in the TLS of November 13, that a study of the life and works of this novelist is already in preparation by Violet Powell, whose review of two of the novels, just reissued by Virago, appeared in that number. As Margaret Kennedy's daughter and literary executor, I am glad of this evidence of revived interest in her work, which is still in copyright, but now, sadly, mostly out of print.

JULIA BIRLEY,  
133 Sydenham Hill, London SE26 6LW.

## 'To The Lighthouse'

Sir, - "But this and his pleasure in it, in the phrases he made, in the ardour of youth, in his wife's beauty, in the tributes that reached him from Swansea, Cardiff, Exeter, Southampton, Kidderminster, Oxford, Cambridge, all had to be deprecatd and concealed under the phrase 'talking nonsense'." (Virginia Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*). Can anyone explain why Kidderminster?

ALAN SHELSTON,  
16 Enville Road, Bowdon, Altrincham, Cheshire.

## Information, please

*Sir Frederick Treves (1853-1923)*: surgeon and travel writer: any letters or reminiscences; for a critical biography to be published in 1983, official, party political, or church attitudes.

L. W. Brady,  
Department of Social Studies, Liverpool Polytechnic, Walton House, 52 Tithebarn Street, Liverpool L2 2NG.

*Edward Johnston (1872-1944)*, calligrapher: whereabouts of any surviving copies of the dust-jackets of the novels *The Narrow World* (1930) and *Great Girl* (1932), both by his daughter, Priscilla Johnston; or other similar ephemeral material; for a bibliography.

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Michael A. P. Shortland,  
Department of Philosophy, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9TT.



## to the editor

## 'The Pursuit of Signs'

Sir, - Having suggested in my review of Jonathan Culler's *The Pursuit of Signs* (January 1) that the most important distinction for any fiction is not that between *Story* and *Discourse* but between what is *true* in it and what is *invented*, I agree with Richard Yarrow (Letters, January 15) that "if fiction must defer to truth, then we must know more about the composition of this truth". He also says, however, that "the awakening of our critical capabilities and sensibilities" through the study of Poetics "will destroy our sense of the truth in fiction" - if that truth is a mere glib matter of "real human nature".

This is the crucial point. "Poetics" can readily suggest that the apparent existence of human nature in literature is determined by an authorial context, its conventions and our expectations; and plausibly argue that what seems like nature and life in Shakespeare, Fielding, or Jane Austen, is actually processed for our recognition inside a closed literary circuit.

In this way Poetics produces a confusion between the means and the effect. Such new styles of investigative terminology may perform a useful service, and yet it would be a dull reader, or cinema-goer, who could think only of how a book or film was made, never as an impression of life on those who are living it. We can try to do both. But, paradoxically, what Richard Yarrow calls "the composition of the truth" cannot ultimately, where art is concerned, be a matter for investigative analysis. We can ask and find out how the illusions of art are achieved, how the character of X is created, but we cannot get behind the question: "Is X true to life?" Poetics cannot and does not want to answer it. It concentrates instead, and often with great subtlety, on the means. But criticism cannot afford to ignore the simplicity of ends, the imponderable problems of mimesis.

What made Dr Leavis, after examining them, exclaim (unexpectedly): "How does Dickens know these truths?" Why did Maurice Baring observe that in reading Tolstoy "you find things out as if you had always known them"? Richard Yarrow implies that a course of Poetics will remove - and rightly - our sense of such truths in fiction. He suggests that students in a technological age should be programmed to respond not to what they feel and see but to the way new technologies function.

What is true and what is made up in a fiction of course interact in complex ways, each helping the other. *Gone With the Wind* is a piece of invention about the South and the Civil War, but Scarlett O'Hara is a true character, whose egoism and indifference to her historical situation help to make his sentimental oversimplification more acceptable. The specification for the fiction of *The Turn of the Screw* depends on its removing from the reader any possibility of getting at the "truth" in the sense of what really happened. But it is full of fascinating truths about the way in which children behave; and these were not at the time familiar truths, but newly revealed in the course of a fiction's artifice. One sees what Leavis meant by "How does Dickens know these truths?" and his point has been elaborated by critics like Hirsch and Strickland, who make a distinction between the critical process and the theories of Poetics.

The arts of fiction should enable the reader to recognize its truth. But a novel like *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, though a good yarn, is not in any sense 'true' in the way that a novel like *Anna Karenina* is. It is in some ways a fantasy figure, like *Anna Karenina*, but it is also concerned to tell truths about her, and he succeeds. Today a novelist's fantasy tends to be accepted as 'truth' because it is 'fiction' and not 'reality'. *The Comfort* of

*Strangers*, for instance, is a meticulous fantasy which obviously intends to tell us disturbing truths about sex, as Fowles pretended to tell us truths about the Victorians. But in neither work is a balance struck between truth and fiction.

*The Turn of the Screw* again offers a contrast. James is not a fantasist, and his art admits - as it were inadvertently - a general truth about children while pursuing its predetermined fictional course. The contemporary fantasist generalizes from his own special preoccupation (McEwan's psychopathic couple resemble the Moors Murderers and the victims those in Hawkes's novel *The Lime Twig*) and his art claims an authority it cannot deliver. His characters are not to be believed in: their function is to give us a Gothic and of "Pleasure to be extracted from Objects of Terror" which Mrs Barbauld was writing about in 1780.

Such modern fantasies usurp the role of the classic novel but cannot fill it. There is nothing wrong with the genre itself, only with its present pretension. Criticism must place it on a lower level than the art which deals effectively and simultaneously both in truth and in fiction.

JDHN BAYLEY,  
St Catherine's College, Oxford.

## Andrei Voznesensky

Sir, - Carol Rumens's defence (Letters, December 18) of her account (November 27) of Voznesensky's performance at the Round House against some of my objections (Letters, December 11), reiterates her misgivings about the refrain of "Chagall's Cornflowers". "Man lives by his alone", "... Voznesensky's definition of the phrase is tedious. The sentiment has a cheap theatricality which suggests that Voznesensky tends, even when making a genuine protest, to say the kind of thing that poets are always expected to say, and it is perhaps for this reason that he is allowed, if under duress, to go on saying it."

This indicates a misunderstanding of how oral verse works, and especially in Russia. The use of variable coda or punchlines is of the essence in poetic poetry, and the more so if it's pitched for the kind of reading at which it's being smuggled past snatches of censorious authorities. The outburst of refrains most immediately audible in translation may seem to sound somewhat received, but isn't it a bit much to "judge" and devalue anyone's "craftsmanship and innovation" on such fragmented evidence? As well write off Dunbar, Thomas, Dylan or Lennon as autobiographers, cheap and hackneyed for the sentiments of "Timor noris contrahit me", "A hard rain's gonna fall" or "Imagine". Instead of paying attention to the overall poetic continuum of which these re-echoing phrases are functional, but utterly inseparable, constituent parts.

So far from being licensed, Voznesensky has consistently been forbidden publication or declamation of "Cornflowers" amongst many poems and challenging to state security than any of Joseph Brodsky's published poetry in English. This is not to disparage Brodsky but, given the hatred, paranoia and - one hopes - guilt towards Jews sustained by the Soviet *Kulpolitik*, it's his Jewishness such as implacable threat. And surely Voznesensky's "remaining a Soviet citizen" ought to enlarge, not diminish understanding for what he's doing? It's not that his poetry's enigma is so soft that "his elders can afford to be indulgent", as Rumens roundly averred; notwithstanding her letter's disclaimer that "the phrasing of [her] original comments made clear" she was only hypothesizing. It's that his ingenuity, bravery, impudence and, possibly, the power of his language, by evoking the same qual-

ities (via re-cited, sonnetized and manuscript circulation) on the part of his enormous following.

Rumens questions my grounds for thinking her "more inward" with Brodsky than Voznesensky. Brodsky has been a much extrapolated martyr-hero of the West since his trial in 1964, and has freely collaborated with influential poet-translators, agencies and publishers on both sides of the Atlantic since his exile from the Soviet Union a decade ago. He travels extensively and independently, increasingly giving interviews, reading and writing - in English. Voznesensky, on the other hand, can only manage a broken out to Britain once before fleeing, as long ago as 1965. He's remained committed to his mother country despite the honps its administrations try to put him through in between denunciations and deportation orders, from Khrushchev on. And he has rarely been as well served by translators (and public readers of translations) he's been unable to work with directly.

Consequently or not, there can be no doubting Rumens's "outwardness", her detachment from (to use her phrase) imaginative response to Voznesensky. Witness her insistence that we "give an outstanding talent (Brodsky's) its due" when it is another major voice, by any standards (Voznesensky's), which is supposed to be the Russian equivalent of a "folk or pop-songwriter/singer" is that at the same time as being Brodsky's equal, at least (but in his own way, of course), for intelligence, wit and sophistication, another side of Voznesensky's address is to the non-literary tradition: the unbroken mainstream of Russian poetics which keeps "the stem art of poetry" flowing into and out of religious ritual, community celebration and confrontation politics. This doesn't mean its power need be based on a quick self. The virtuous projection of activist, passionate and musical language in theatres frequently results in a rich rather than, pace Carol Rumens, "a cheap theatricality". Her method, of evaluations deduced from isolated phrases, is simply ill-equipped to come to terms with the more subtly accessible and purposeful aspects of Voznesensky's originality obtain.

MICHAEL HODRIVITZ,  
New Departures, Pledmont, Blaisy,  
Stroud, Gloucestershire GL6 7BU.

## Robin Hood

Sir, - Referring to J. A. Burrow's review of David Wiles's *The Early Plays of Robin Hood* (January 1), it seems curious that anyone bothers to resurrect a topic which could be said to have been adequately covered many years ago.

Academic interest in the archer-hero has of recent years been directed towards the search for the historical character, if any, behind the legends. After the publication of Dr J. W. Walker's paper, "Robin Hood Identified" in the *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, XXXVI (1944), the TLS came down in favour of the Wakefield Robin Hood, first identified by the Rev Joseph Hunter in 1852. Hunter's theory of literary and historical deduction, though scorned in immoderate terms by the American F. J. Child in his *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, appeared to be confirmed by Dr Walker's discovery of this Robin Hood's property listed as being confiscated after the Earl of Lancaster's Rebellion in 1322. (Hunter assumed that after the battle of Boroughbridge Robin and his band took refuge in Barnsdale.)

In my *Truth about Robin Hood* (1951, 1978), I showed that several of the characters in a *Lytell Geste* or *Robyn Hood* can be found in the Wakefield court rolls before and after Boroughbridge: Rogar of Doncaster, the alleged lover of the prioress of Kirkstee who is said to have conspired to bleed the hero to death; Richard of the Lee, no doubt the prototype of the forlorn knight, Richard-at-the-lee; the name With-hondes, probably the family name of the one who came to be known as Gilbert with the White Hand, and so on.

All these discoveries of the Wakefield connections have been ignored or dismissed as the vapourings of mere antiquaries or "local enthusiasts". However, Dr J. R. Maddicot of Exeter College, Oxford, in "The birth and setting of the ballads of Robin Hood" (*English Historical Review*, xxi, 1978), declares that only the identification of the sheriff of Nottingham in the story will firmly date the *Geste*, and this he proceeds to do. The villain of the ballads is identified as John de Osenford who held the office at various times from March 1334 to 1339 and was finally outlawed. Dr Maddicot identifies the abbot of St Mary's, York, as Thomas de Multon (as did Dr Walker) and the "hye justyce of Engloode" as Sir Geoffrey le Scrope, another Yorkshireman. The chancery and the King's Bench were stationed in York in much of the 1330s and the sheriffs would have to report there. So Dr Maddicot has found that the story, truth or fiction, belongs to the same period as the period identified by Joseph Hunter.

Dr Maddicot admits that the sheriffs and justices were common to the period. One wonders if he has been picked on because Dr Maddicot, being based in Oxford, is able to investigate thoroughly this particular individual. The sheriff was a later addition to the story. Once the tale of "Robin Hood the Knight and the Monk" (the last episode of the *Geste*) became popular, other rhymesters stole the characters and adapted old stories or invented new ones around them. The noble fellows of the first story become quite ruthless in other hands, as in "Robin Hood and the Monk" (the last episode of the *Geste*) where the Potter, a pattern cutter from the stories of kings' encounters with commoners.

P. VALENTINE HARRIS,  
6 Valley Rise, Salisbury Green,  
Southampton SO3 6BN.

## Blue Plaques

Sir, - E. S. Turner, reviewing *The Blue Plaques Guide to London* by Caroline Dakers (December 23) comments that "Percy Circus [is] not a name". It is "in situ", and a plaque is affixed to No 16 where Lelia and her wife Nadia stayed in 1905 for the 3rd Congress of the Russian Social Democratic and Labour Party.

DAVID E. MUSPRATT,  
42 Harvey Goodwin Avenue,  
Cambridge CB4 3EU.

## 'La Ronde'

Sir, - Gabrielle Annan (Contributors, January 22) noted that the published scripts of *La Ronde* but not the Methuen edition of Frank Marcus's translation for BBC Television which we published on January 7 at £2.50 (0 413 49530 2).

DAVID ROSS,  
Methuen London Ltd, 11 New  
Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE.

To all American readers and subscribers  
If you have any difficulties concerning your subscription to or the distribution of the TLS in the United States, please get in touch with Ms Nora Niemi of Times Newspapers of Great Britain Inc, 201 East 42nd Street, New York 10017, telephone (212) 986 9230.

## Among this week's contributors

KENNETH BALLHATCHET's most recent book is *Race, Sex and Class under the Raj*, 1980.

RICHARD BROWN is the co-editor of the *James Joyce Broadsheet*.

RICHARD ELLMANN is Goldsmiths' Professor of English Literature at the University of Oxford. His books include *Ulysses* in 1972, and his edition of the *Selected Letters of James Joyce* was published in 1975.

EVA ROSS's most recent novel is *Working*, 1980.

J. F. C. HARRISON is Professor of History at the University of Sussex. His books include *Early Victorian Britain*, 1971, and *The Second Coming*, 1979.

ALETHA HAYTER's books include *Opium* and *The Romantic Imagination*, 1968.

ROBERT HAYWARD is the author of *Divine Name and Presence: the Mena*, 1981.

T. W. HUTCHINSON is the author of *The Philosophy and Politics of Economics*, 1981.

DAVID McLELLAN is Professor of Kent. His *Karl Marx: Interviews and Recollections* was published last year.

J. L. MACKIE, who died last December, was a Fellow of University College, Oxford, and Reader in Philosophy at the University of Oxford. His books include *Truth, Probability and Paradox*, 1973, and *Ethics*, 1977; a new book, *The Miracle of Theism*, will be published later this year.

MICHAEL MARON is a lecturer in English at University College London.

MARY MIDDLETON is the author of *Beast and Man*, 1980, and *Heart and Mind*, 1981.

GEORGE MIKES's autobiography, *How to Be Seventy*, will be published next week.

OWEN MORRIS's collection of poems include *Star Gate*, 1979.

KENNETH D. MORRIS's books include *Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1980*, 1981.

CHRISTOPHER NORRIS's *William Empson and the Philosophy of Literary Criticism* was published in 1978.

CRAIG RABIN's most recent collection of poems, *A Free Translation*, was published last year.

D. D. RAFAEL's books include *Problems of Political Philosophy*, 1970.

BLAIR WOODEN is a Fellow of St Edmund Hall, Oxford. He is the author of *The Rump Parliament*, 1974, and editor of Edmund Spenser's *A Voyage from the Watchtower*, 1978.

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## BIOGRAPHY

## The price of individuation

By Daniel Johnson

RONALD HAYMAN:

K: A Biography of Kafka

349pp. Weidenfeld and Nicholson.  
£16.50 (paperback, £8.50).  
0 297 77886 6

In Kafka's penultimate story a mysterious beast has constructed a vast underground labyrinth by beating the earth till his brow bleeds. Though the size of the burrow extends the area to be defended from nameless enemies, and thus the anxiety of the narrator, he comforts himself with the tactical advantage of knowing intimately the warren's ramifications: "The robber can very easily become my prey and a sweet-tasting one". The biographer of Kafka is a posthumous scavenger of this kind, who cannot afford to underestimate the slipperiness of the being at the centre of this seething undergrowth of literary invention. Nor can the biographer expect to ravish the inner sanctum without a struggle. Ronald Hayman appears to take the role of this story for a human ostrich, who occupies himself with literature underground, but whose life is somehow exposed, along with all the secrets of the buried head, to the diligent surveyor. Hayman is not looking for a minotaur, nor will the reader find one in his book: rather, a sentimental vegetarian with bad dreams and worse lungs.

The explanation of Hayman's honourable failure lies in his title. Largely to blame for the myth of Kafka the weakling is a crudely autobiographical interpretation of the novels and stories - an interpretation common to all three schools of criticism (religious, psychoanalytical/existentialist, Czech nationalist) which were distinguished by Walter Muschg and refuted by him and by Benjamin, Heller and others many years ago.

Kafka's Sancho Panza imprisons his personal devil in the literary character of Don Quixote; if Kafka did share a limited number of experiences with Joseph K., Georg Bendemann and the rest, that is a reason for distinguishing him from them, since he would otherwise never have confronted the reader with so personal and thus hateful a thing as his past. But in any case, "the experience of being Kafka" (to use Hayman's phrase) was literary before it ever reached the page. "More and more fearful as I write . . . More than consolation is: You too have weapons."

Even as a boy he wrote, despite adult sneers: his photographs at the age of eleven shows a face of great force and shrewdness. Hannah Arendt rightly draws attention to the tradition among German Jews that the sons who studied (even if, like Kafka, they studied not the law of God's people, but that of the Romans, their oppressors) should need to earn a living - and to Kafka's bold renunciation of the negation of this milieu by taking an ordinary job. One must be grateful to Hayman for reading the voluminous reports Kafka wrote compassionately and well. Not long before he died he found time to comfort a girl in the street who had lost her doll, by writing letters from the toy on its travels. His inextinguishable kindness stemmed from a peculiar mystery of his environment, not the desire to placate it; still less from naïveté. Towards literary windbags he was merciless; he sided not with Karl Rossmann, who admits to knowing nothing of politics, but with the student who replies: "That is a mistake."

What was the essence of Kafka's resilience, and why were anxiety and vulnerability inseparable from it? "Shame," wrote Walter Benjamin, "... is Kafka's most powerful aspect". It is the faculty attributed to the most powerful visages to congeal in the nebula of *The Castle*, the

secretaries' attributed to Büchel, one of their number. Their shame, we later learn, is especially acute at the hour when, half-conscious and by accident, K. has disturbed them. K. himself feels no shame; he is disliking by his purposefulness. The women are, as in *The Trial*, shameless, with one exception. Amelia, who was ashamed to answer the loathsome summons from Sortini, is cast into outer darkness with all her family. The delicacy of these officials is turned like the hidden lunar hemisphere perpetually away from the creatures over whom they tyrannize. The animal world which Kafka conceives are all ageing and threatened from beyond; the ape has become a man by dint of determination and self-degradation, but by day he must be ashamed of his sub-human female. The narrator of *In the Penal Colony* belongs to a "lost" but more innocent, more dogmatic generation than his forefathers. In his youthful attempt to render the earth articulate through starvation - perhaps Hayman is right to see a satire here, but that is only one layer of meaning - he is recalled from his bloody puddle of fear and shame by the question: "Don't you understand the self-explanatory?" A "boundless natural way of life" had beckoned him, though the happy, the shameless, the tormentors of lonely bachelors, are already "dangerous" there. The dog in whom the unhappy consciousness has damned describes himself as "cold, anxious, withdrawn, calculating" - the terms Walter Rathenau, unoriginal as a philosopher but well known to Kafka, used for his *Zweckmensch* ("purpose-man"), the characteristic urban intellectual of the age, considered Jewish and hence modern by German Jews, modern and hence Jewish by other Germans. And indeed, it was in Kafka's case neither parental nor social influences, nor even anti-Semitism which created an identity he could acknowledge as Jewish, but a certain kind of self-consciousness,

capable also of informing Milena that only his anxiety was lovable, and Robert Klopstock that only by having would his friend learn to love him.

Max Scheler - whom Kafka was reading in 1917 - produced in 1913 an extraordinary work, posthumously published, which Erich Heller introduced into the Kafka debate: *On Shame and the Feeling of Shame*. The curse of Hofmannsthal's Elektra is, she says, the sacrifice of her veil of shame for her un-murderous purpose; and Scheler shows, not merely, as Heller says, that shame is the price of individualism, but that it is the last defence of the individual that which suspends man (like Kafka or Zarathustra's trapeze-artists) between god and beast - the counterpoint to grace, which, says Kleist, "appears most purely in that human form which either has no consciousness or an infinite consciousness". (How could anyone have expected grace to descend from Kafka's monument to shame, his *Castle*?) The use man offers an ironical commentary on Scheler's insight, that men hide their knees first to disguise their closest affinity with that primeval world to which, as Benjamin saw, so many of Kafka's beings belong: the former ape repudiates a journalist's charge that by pulling down his trousers he reveals his animal nature: "I, I may take off my trousers before anyone; you will find nothing there but a well-kept coat of fur and the scar of an . . . insolent shot . . . Were, however, this writer to take off his trousers before visitors, that would indeed have another aspect and I will grant it as a sign of reason that he does not do so." Scheler shows how an activity like procreation evokes shame only when it assumes a purposeful character; pride and humility, he argues, miraculously mingle in shame. Kafka's language, which is compounded of just these qualities, is also the man; who else could sign a letter, crossing out Franz, F, and

Comparative criticism: a yearbook, 3, edited by E. S. Shaffer (330pp. Cambridge University Press, £20, 0 521 23276 7) takes as its theme rhetoric and comparative critical method as applied to the writing of history. Barthes's essay on "The Discourse of History" is here translated for the first time by Stephen Bann, who himself writes on "The historian as taxidermist: Ranke, Barante, Water-ton". The volume also includes articles by J. P. Stern on "Literature and Ideology", by Garland Cannon on the correspondence of Sir William Jones, and by Arnaldo Momigliano on Hayden White's tropes.

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# The prophet as activist

By David McLellan

ALAN GILBERT:

Marx's Politics  
Communists and citizens  
327pp. Oxford: Martin Robertson.  
£16.50.  
0 85520 441 9

Within the Marxist political tradition, possibly the most debated (and of course never resolved) question is how far Lenin remained faithful to the principles of Marx. Those who have wished to portray Lenin as at least consistent with Marx have usually pointed to the different climates of the Tsarist autocracy and Western Europe as justifying the apparent divergences of Leninist practice. However, Alan Gilbert's strikingly original and detailed work sets out to show that there is really no problem: Marx was a thoroughgoing Leninist *avant la lettre* and those who have tried to open up a gap between Marx and Lenin – or even thought that there was a problem in reconciling their respective attitudes – have simply not read Marx carefully enough.

In giving us a Leninist Marx, Dr Gilbert has chosen his period well. He concentrates on Marx's strategy immediately before and after 1848. If there are similarities with Lenin, they are likely to be found in this period when the socio-political situation facing the two leaders – autocratic monarchy with rising liberal opposition, small proletariat and large peasant mass – were broadly parallel. There are only a few references to Marx's politics after 1852. Thus there is little sustained discussion of interpretations – such as that of Lichheim – that Marx changed his earlier Jacobin views into something akin to Social Democracy. Indeed, the author promises us a second volume which will "examine *Capital* in the context of Marx's activity in the International Workingmen's Association and in the forma-

tion of the first socialist parties". Thus prospective readers should be warned that the title is misleading: only a specific period of "Marx's politics" is discussed in any detail.

Marx's Politics follows the path of Marx's own political activity between the years 1843 and 1852. It is divided into three sections. In the first, Gilbert traces the influence of the French Revolution and of Charism in the formation of Marx's version of communism as embodied in the Communist League and its *Communist Manifesto*. The second section deals with Marx's attempts to apply his strategy in Germany in 1848 and 1849. The third section discusses how Marx, on his return to England, altered his ideas in response to the defeat of the revolutionary movement on the Continent.

Gilbert wishes to counterpose his study of Marx's politics to what he considers to be the currently fashionable interpretations of Marx as an economic determinist, a term which he uses widely enough to encompass most previous commentators on Marx. His particular targets are Shlomo Avineri's *Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx* which, by emphasizing the Hegelian background to Marx's thought, puts more emphasis on evolution than on revolution, and Richard Hunt's *The Political Ideas of Marx and Engels* which explains Marx's changes of tactics by the different constituencies to which he was successively appealing. (It is a pity, however, that he does not mention Maguire's disciplined and nuanced study, *Marx's Theory of Politics*, published in 1978.) As befits the Harvard PhD thesis (submitted in 1974) on which the book is based, the writing is often sharp and intelligent, the command of sources is excellent and the good points are established against the adversaries Avineri and Hunt, and the section at the beginning on Marx's debt to the French Revolution is particularly good. But the desire of the author to portray Marx as a proto-Leninist does come up against insuperable difficulties.

First, there is the need to provide some theoretical foundation for the view that Marx pursued a coherent political strategy in 1848-49. To this end, Gilbert interestingly uses the work of Hilary Putnam in the philosophy of science. According to Putnam, scientists never apply a general theory by itself, but always in conjunction with auxiliary statements which enable them to specify the context; and if anomalies occur, then scientists will usually seek for new auxiliary statements to explain them while retaining the given paradigm. Similarly, according to Gilbert, Marx used his general theory of modes of production and class struggle in conjunction with a growing number of auxiliary statements drawn from his practical experience. The difficulty with this view is that political and social theories lack the precision of theories in the natural sciences and so it is not easy to see what auxiliary statements would be excluded on Marx's general theory. The impression from Gilbert's account is that Marx's theory is so all-encompassing that it would accommodate virtually any auxiliary statement or turn of events.

Second, and more specifically, the reading of Marx from a Leninist perspective encounters a difficulty in their respective attitudes to the peasantry. Although Marx did not have the uniformly negative attitude conveyed in David Mitrany's *Marx against the Peasant*, neither did he display the coherent and positive views of Lenin and Mao, as Gilbert would have us believe. An obvious difficulty is the negative view of the peasantry contained in the *Communist Manifesto*. Gilbert tells us that Marx here gave "a conservative albeit still dialectical estimate of peasant political potential". The peasants would play a "reactionary" role in so far as they tried to "roll back the wheel of history". What Marx actually says about the peasantry in the passage referred to is not conditional at all: "They are not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay more, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history." Another example of the way

in which Gilbert squeezes his sources further than most would think they warranted is his account of the republican rally at Wrotham in September 1848. Gilbert exaggerates Marx's role in this event as he is clearly hard up for material to back up his view that Marx's main concern at this time was the creation of a worker-peasant alliance. Gilbert tells us that "Marx organized his first Communist rally in Germany among rural peasants in Wrotham". But Marx played only a minor part in attending the rally and did not attend it in person. Moreover, from the meagre accounts of it which we have it is clear that the participants were more interested in the implications for German nationalism of the Schleswig-Holstein question than in any "worker-peasant alliance".

More fundamentally still, it is quite unclear that Marx possessed a coherent socialist strategy for Germany in 1848. In spite of Engels' opinion to the contrary, Gilbert insists that Marx and Engels did advocate socialism in Germany in 1848. But he is unable to give any evidence of artisan support for the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* and it is most striking how, in its first months at least, the paper avoided any mention of working-class demands and stuck rigidly to a radical liberal line. Gilbert rightly draws our attention to the *Demands of the Communist Party in Germany* (and reprints them in an appendix to the book), but they were drafted before Marx's return to Cologne and did not figure at all in the pages of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. Indeed, Engels reported from Bremen that if a single copy of the *Demands* were to be lost there "then everything would be lost for us". Marx was also clearly opposed to the idea of fielding candidates to articulate specifically working-class demands. Gilbert supports his view by supposing a close collaboration between Marx and such artisan leaders as Moll who operated the worker associations which pursued a line too "left" to be reconciled with his own policy of a united front of all democratic forces. But

there is no evidence at all of such cooperation and such information does exist suggests that Moll could not have adopted a "too left" line too far removed from grass-roots radicalism.

It is significant that Gilbert devotes very little space to the apparently fundamental shifts in Marx's strategy: his decision in the spring of 1849 to reject his previous temporizing and throw in his lot with the working-class organizations, and his rejection in September 1849 of the idea of permanent revolution. Attention to these shifts would obviously put more emphasis on change than on continuity in Marx's approach. But Gilbert's Marx is teleological: in his account, Marx rarely simply changes his mind or admits he was mistaken – he is always "advancing" or "going beyond" previous positions. To "over-estimate" Marx seems drastically to over-estimate the growth of radical working-class consciousness. In the one passage where Gilbert discusses this, he refers to Marx's discussion in *Capital* of the fetishism of commodities and mentions the obviously interlocking effect on the progress of working-class consciousness and organization implied by such a view of the all-pervasive power of the commodity ideology. But it is equally clear that Marx had no full appreciation of this in 1848 and one is left wondering how the analysis of *Capital* could possibly be harmonized with some (though not all) of the tactics of 1848-49. One of the drawbacks of this view Gilbert has organized his work is that he is apt to refer to some of Marx's later views but without going into sufficient detail to demonstrate that at least that makes sense of the continuity of Marx's thought. But at least that makes sense of the continuity of Marx's thought. But at least that makes sense of the continuity of Marx's thought.

Less than twenty years ago this acknowledgment of American influence might have seemed strange. It had been obvious to Pound and Eliot, after all, that they were to find their way into the main current of European literature they would have to come to England. America was a province. And yet it was they, *arrivistes*, who were to carry the banner of English modernism. Eventually the English literary world adopted Eliot as its own and, with some unseemly, granted recognition to Pound. It was really not until the early 1960s that the English began to notice virtues in Pound that had nothing to do with Eliot, that were inalienably American and had only become fruit in the land and dialect Pound had himself forsaken. At about the same time they also became aware of an American poetry, quite independent of British and

## Masters in modernism

By Clive Wilmer

CHARLES TOMLINSON:

Some Americans  
A Personal Record  
134pp. University of California Press. \$10.95.  
0 520 04037 6

Charles Tomlinson's *Some Americans* is a brief memoir concerning five poets – William Carlos Williams, Marianne Moore, Ezra Pound, Louis Zukofsky, George Oppen – and a painter, Georgia O'Keefe. It tells of visits Tomlinson paid to each of them early in his career; pilgrimages, one is tempted to say, for the book is in part an act of homage to six Americans without whose example he could hardly have written as he has. Each of the six, moreover, is firmly set in his or her local habitation: Tomlinson's prose, quite as much as his poetry, is remarkable for its sense of place.

Less than twenty years ago this acknowledgment of American influence might have seemed strange. It had been obvious to Pound and Eliot, after all, that they were to find their way into the main current of European literature they would have to come to England. America was a province. And yet it was they, *arrivistes*, who were to carry the banner of English modernism. Eventually the English literary world adopted Eliot as its own and, with some unseemly, granted recognition to Pound. It was really not until the early 1960s that the English began to notice virtues in Pound that had nothing to do with Eliot, that were inalienably American and had only become fruit in the land and dialect Pound had himself forsaken. At about the same time they also became aware of an American poetry, quite independent of British and

far from provincial, that had been developing on its home ground throughout the period of Eliot's exile. Wallace Stevens and Marianne Moore were by this time something more than names. The publication of W. C. Williams in the mid-1940s constituted a greater challenge and led to a rush of less durable names, many of whom Tomlinson was active in promoting. Two of these, Oppen and Zukofsky, provide the material for the second of his four chapters.

It was now the turn of the British to feel provincial, and the American tradition spawned a host of imitators in this country. But this reversal of roles was never as simple as it briefly seemed. For one thing, it is doubtful whether the classic generation of American modernists has ever taken root over here; today, English editions of Stevens, Williams and Moore are all out of print or hard to come by. For another, the British poets most deeply affected – Tomlinson, David Gunn and J. H. Prynne – were not of a kind to renounce their native traditions. Indeed, a letter from Williams praising Tomlinson's poetry for its "generosity towards the American idiom" seems to have caused the latter some disquiet. It was an oddly insensitive compliment, coming from a man who valued the organic relation of language to place, and it raises an interesting question: why should the heir to a major tradition imitate poets who had learned their English – as Williams proudly insisted – "from the mouths of Polish mothers"? Part of the answer must be that *Amintore* is precisely what the better English poets did not do. In spite of some colourless attempts at Williams's "three-line line", most of Tomlinson's work draws its lifeblood from a native lineage that connects Wordsworth, Coleridge, Ruskin and Hopkins: a tradition of "natural piety" that, in Tomlinson's judgment, had become closely interwoven with a cognate tradition of American art.

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typified by Williams and his Objectivist followers. "Natural piety" seems the suitably Wordsworthian phrase but it needs qualification, not least because the American tradition is by now essentially urban in sensibility. Moreover, the piety is no longer felt to have transcendental implications but expresses itself as a respect for particulars, for the otherness of things. It involves a recognition that the world is simply not amenable to language, is not to be acquired by human speech. Therefore the language tends to be edged and dry, cleared of private obsession. The paradox of much American poetry, as readers of Wallace Stevens have often noticed, is that in endeavouring to render particularly – and necessarily failing to do so – the poets have had to turn their attention towards the language itself. The case for doing so might be represented by George Oppen. The very focus of Oppen's work is the space between language and the world. In 1962, Tomlinson recalls, Oppen's second collection, *The Materials*, was one of a stack of books he had been asked to review. Depressed by the quality of the other books, he opened it without enthusiasm but, almost at once, "the weight lifted". Here are the first lines he must have read:

The men talking  
Near the room's center. They have said  
More than they had intended  
Pinning in the upsur  
Of the living room  
An assault  
On the quiet continent  
Beyond the window  
Flesh and rock and hunger  
Loose in the night sky  
Hardened into soil  
Those are the opening lines of "Eclogue", a poem concerned, as the title suggests, with nature (that is to

say, "the given world") and with human conservation. The ambiguous syntax of the poem and the visual space that punctuates its form are the window-frame beyond which, removed and inviolate, "the quiet continent" has its being. Language (Oppen seems to be saying) could not exist without the world, though the world would exist if language had never been; nevertheless, the world would have no existence for the speaking animal if it were not for the assaults his language makes upon it.

And yet, the British reader might reasonably reply, the culture which produced Hardy and Hopkins need not shame or inferiority in this matter of language respecting the intractable particular. The difference between the two traditions is more deeply embedded in national history. Oppen's "continent", a word used with all its connotations, may provide the clue if we first take it at face value. Instinctively Oppen thinks of his language and identity as drawing their character not from a small region (such as Dorset, or even England) but from America itself. The language of American poetry belongs in the mid world but lings again and to address itself to the things of the new – a wilderness untouched by history or human association. This dialogue with the frontier is what distinguishes American writing. It was what Pound saw reflected in early European literature – the freshness of the Troubadours and the *dolce stil nuovo* – and sought to recover for the English of his day. Stevens, too, for all his veneration of elegance, was preoccupied with wilderness: how meaning and music are to be derived from it and, more, how once achieved they may recreate it in the reader's imagination. The whole sense of the unmediated object that one finds in Williams and Moore is the product of a culture that has erected its stockade on the edge of the unknown.

Thus the opposition of language to reality is more intense than it could ever be in Europe. Language is, in effect, the poet's material – as removed from its object as a sculptor's stone from the flesh he seeks to imitate. But this kind of attention to language is not without its dangers, for example the sterile pedantry which Tomlinson's poem "The House" find in Louis Zukofsky. In his work particularly of speed descends into willful acrobatics. It is baffling to find Tomlinson recommending lines like these:

Hear, hear  
Clear  
Mirror,  
Care  
His error.  
In her  
Care  
Is clear  
This is poetry written to a formula, and its inadequacy may be seen as of Tomlinson's own limitations. His account of American poetry is far from being the whole story. It is not merely that the British reader is accustomed to great poetry that is innocent of its means. It is also that there is much good poetry which, far from being fresh, derives its beauty and moral force from the well-used collage of poetic diction.

It must also be said that Tomlinson's taste and sensibility are deeply Puritanical. He is therefore able to endorse – wholeheartedly, though not without humour – Moore's old-fashioned insistence on "seemliness" in poetry and to recognize that word as representing the "kind of probity" he had early sought in his own work and found awaiting him in Pound and Stevens. American art is a large extent the expression of a Puritan culture, but there is always an element in it whose character is determined by opposition to Puritanism. Tomlinson acknowledges its existence when he contrasts the vision of Georgia O'Keefe ("a separating vision giving her space in which to contemplate the thing before her") with the "unlived" vision of the pantheist ("the oceanic engulfment of Jackson Pollock's..."). He is, however, no detractor in last Crane's "Voyager" reformation: "America's yearning for puritanical unity to be achieved 'by a surrender of the self' in a communion with imperious forces".

Such a surrender must involve not just the death of self, but the death of that sense of individual responsibility which conscience hides us never to violate even for the most obsessive idea or the most spiritual ideal". This is Puritanism at its best, and I should be happy to embrace it if it were not for the fact that it rules out of court both the mysticism of Pollock on the one hand and the neo-classicism of Ivor Winters on the other.

Winters deserves mention here because he was a friend of Crane's who judged Crane's work in terms strikingly similar to Tomlinson's. In spite of a brief but sympathetic portrait of Winters, Tomlinson fails to mention this fact. He might also have made some reference to Winters's poem "The Slow Pacific Swell" – an antidote to the oceanic vision if ever there was one – when he observes how his "own preferred American poems have been seapieces" which "seemed to propose a moral term where you could confront nature". For the American imagination, as Winters's poem recognizes, only the sea can compete with the inhuman scale of the native wilderness. Only the sea can be symbolically charged with the significance of nature untouched by man, existing apart from him and welcoming him only with the promise of death. This is not exactly alien to the English imagination but it implies an utterly different experience of the world, one in which the English may now be ready to learn from.

The Issues I have touched on here are only raised or alluded to in passing in *Some Americans*. It is first and foremost a relaxed and genial enterprise, in which an important poet discharges a debt of honour to his masters and invites the reader to share in the pleasures of memory. Much of the book's appeal lies in incidental descriptions of the places Tomlinson's pilgrimages led him to: Brooklyn, smalltown New Jersey, the New Mexico desert and, in the last chapter, Italy, the adopted home of Ezra Pound. The individual portraits, too, are well-rounded and good-humoured.

The London Borough of Camden's Festival of Contemporary Poetry opens today at 7.30 pm at Keats House with a reading by Basil Bunting and continues with readings every Friday and Saturday evening there until 27 February: some of the other poets taking part are Ryszard Krynicki and Eva Lipsk from Poland, Thomas Braschi, Bernd Jenzsch and Kurt Bartsch from West Germany, Minoru Nakamura from Japan, André du Bouchet from France, and W. S. Graham.

David Gascoyne: on his fifty-fifth birthday (34pp. Enitharmon Press, 22 Huntingdon Road, East Finchley, London N2 9DU, in association with Ampersand Press. £3. 0 904289 18 8) was published in October in a limited edition of 350. The booklet contains poems mostly written especially for the occasion, by Abdullah al-Udhari, Keith Bosley, Richard Burns, Joseph Chifari, Leonard Clark, Jérôme Crutche, Mick Gower, Michael Hamburger, John Heath-Stubbs, Adrian Henri, Phoebe Hearke, Jeremy Hooker, Frances Horowitz, Michael Horowitz, Edward Reed, Stephen Roper, Geoffrey Thurlay and David Wright. It also contains prose tributes from Anthony Rudolf, Pamela Chandler, Lawrence Fixel, Derek Stanford, and a poem "After Friedrich Hölderlin" translated by David Gascoyne.

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## Judging and spectating

By D. D. Raphael

KNUD HAAKONSEN:

The Science of a Legislator:  
The Natural Jurisprudence of David Hume and Adam Smith  
240pp. Cambridge University Press.  
£17.50.  
0 521 23891 9

Knud Haakonsen has lost no time in making use of the new material on Adam Smith which has been published in the past few years. His book is primarily a study of Smith's account of jurisprudence but this naturally extends to Smith's views on the history of society and on the concept of justice in relation to ethics and politics. Since Dr Haakonsen believes that the influence of David Hume on Adam Smith was especially marked in the field of theoretical jurisprudence, he prefaces his study of Smith's ideas with a substantial chapter on Hume's theory of justice.

For the major part of his book Haakonsen has drawn extensively upon the volume, in the Glasgow edition of Smith's works which prints two reports of the *Lectures on Jurisprudence*. A certain amount of the material in the lectures was embodied in the *Wealth of Nations*, and Haakonsen makes good use of that book too. In addition, he compares, when possible, the reports of the jurisprudence lectures with some brief notes of them taken or copied at an earlier stage by one of Smith's Glasgow colleagues, John Anderson. Haakonsen has made himself equal to well acquainted with Smith's other works. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* is one of his main sources for Smith's moral theory and in par-

ticular for his more theoretical ideas about justice.

The final result of Haakonsen's investigation is not a coherent whole. The fault lies in his materials, not in what he has done with them. Hume had a firm, well-worked-out theory of justice, which Haakonsen presents to us in a clear fashion and with some originality of interpretation. Smith too had a theory of justice, but nothing like so carefully or fully worked-out. I think he hoped to clarify it through his investigation of the history of law. He usually reached his theoretical ideas after beginning with historical inquiries. As late as 1785 he wrote of still being engaged on a "theory and history of law and government", but his manuscript for this enterprise, along with others, was destroyed by his executors at his urgent request.

Two books that Smith himself saw through the press retained a great deal of what had previously formed the content of lectures, so one is apt to suppose that his lectures on jurisprudence give us the gist of what his book on the subject would have said. But so far as the theory of jurisprudence goes, they are in a rough state and represent only an early stage of his thinking. Even at the end of his life, he may not have made all that much progress with the theory, but he had achieved a few ideas which he had in unrealistic hope. So it is unrealistic to put the *Lectures on Jurisprudence* alongside his perfected works, and expect to obtain from them a coherent set of ideas which we find in the *Moral Sentiments* and the *Wealth of Nations*. Haakonsen is well aware of this and does not try to do more than his source materials warrant. However, it explains why his book lacks coherence.

Haakonsen has in fact tried as far as he can to look for systematization.

He relates the impartial spectator of Smith's ethical theory to the function of a judge in a court of law, and he argues that the doctrine of unintended consequences in economics (the "invisible hand") can be found in Hume's theory of justice and is carried over by Smith to the understanding of natural law generally. In these interpretations Haakonsen shows originality and insight. He sometimes exaggerates the suggested connection between the theory of the impartial spectator and the doctrine of the jurisprudence lectures, but the basic idea is sound: Smith did after all write, in the *Moral Sentiments*, of conscience (the impartial spectator) and of actual spectators as being made the "judge of mankind" and as having the "jurisdiction" of "tribunals".

On Smith's view of natural law, Smith's view of the history of law

Haakonsen is again perceptive. At a first reading the *Moral Sentiments* gives the impression of inconsistency: Smith starts off in the scientific spirit of empiricism, ready to explain moral concepts in terms of human psychology; but then he appears to take a leap back into traditional theological doctrine with talk of moral rules as laws of God. More careful attention to the text, however, shows that Smith remains an empiricist throughout and in fact reaches a subtle psychology and sociology. Haakonsen sees this very well. Smith's theory, he says, is "really proposing a theory of human nature" and "a completely naturalistic theory of religious belief which is part and parcel of his explanation of the moral sentiments".

If Haakonsen is strong on giving us an overall view of theories, he is sometimes weak on detailed points of interpretation. In the Hume chapter there are two or three surprising instances of loose thought. However, he himself corrects loose thought. In others, when he shows that Smith's history of society is not strictly a "materialist" or "economic" theory of history because it does not treat economic factors as the sole determinant of social change. All in all, this is a valuable contribution to the study of Smith's thought.

*Constitutional Development in the USSR* (310pp., Methuen, £12.50, 0 416 71680 6) by Aryeh L. Ungar examines the political institutions and processes of the Soviet state in the context of its four constitutions (1918, 1924, 1936 and 1977) which are given in full, with a list of all substantive amendments. Ungar provides introductory commentaries to each constitution which analyse its provisions in relation to actual political and legal practice.

## Dido

The day opens, bland  
and milky-blue. A woman  
is looking out at a rain-washed garden.  
In her thoughts a wooden flute and  
spice trees, and the sun  
flashing off the bracelet at her wrist.  
She is no longer waiting for something to happen.

Her quiet face observes  
the evidence of an order  
older than Greece, in whose projection  
the courtyard holds the trees, and  
all her memories stir so gently  
as leaves that flicker on the wall below her.

A stranger already knocks at the gate of the palace.

Elaine Feinstein

By Hugo Williams

HENRY CHAPIN:

The Haunt of Time  
Chosen Poems, Old and New  
144pp. Dublin, New Hampshire:  
William L. Bauman. \$6.95.  
0 87233 056 7

The first poems in *The Haunt of Time* were published in the *London Mercury* in 1926, the most recent in *The Sound* in 1980. But the book is not the sweeping chronicle of the mid-century it appears to be. Rather, it is a sparing selection from mostly recent work: Chapin was born in 1893 and grew up in Springfield, Massachusetts, where his Huguenot forebears settled in the 1600s. He was a boyhood friend of Scott Fitzgerald and graduated from Princeton the same year. He probably knew Fitzgerald in Europe, since he spent the next few years in France and England, publishing poems in magazines alongside Yeats, Sassoon and Masfield from whom he seems to have learnt something, as the extracts here from his two long poems of Western migration suggest. Returning to America, he took up farming and local politics in Pennsylvania, and for the next two decades published little apart from these epics. The better-known of these is *The Adventures of Johnny Appleseed*, though it is hard to tell, from the "new" titles provided, whether any of it is reprinted here. It was not until 1960, when he returned to New England and full-time writing, that his first collection of poems was published. This has been followed by an astonishing nine volumes in subsequent years.

*The Haunt of Time* is curiously organized. With such a long life's work it might have been instructive if the poems had been presented in chronological order, or dated. Instead, the early "New England Sentiment" of the 1920s appears within a few pages of "Li Po Comes Home", one of the more recent.

But despite his long narrative efforts and broad Whitmanesque gestures, the overall effect of Chapin's selected poems is that of an occasional, if not amateur approach to poetry. This is as it should be.

A cool breath falls from the mountain.  
Li Po opens his robe of fur.  
Smiling the slides in.  
Li Po dismisses the moon.

Just is one of the components of a healthy life for Chapin, but the New Englander cannot help wagging a finger: "But such the shining sun, face and form I ere not mistook for love." (As if one could ever be sure of that, or want to be!) The roots of Li Po's work are plainly in his native State; the sea and the pioneering spirit are his lifelong obsessions. Frost is the shining model (his material overlaps with Frost's), and the influence of Pound is also felt, though Chapin does not share Pound's insistence on the new. Chapin's late-flowering creativity seems to have given him to return to his childhood home with his second wife, Paula Van Dyke who was tragically drowned there not long afterwards.

The erratic, gentle bells at harbour mouth  
answer each other as they always have,  
asking the last sound you could have heard  
when the sea you loved took your final breath.

In this moving elegy, "I Beg To Report", which is spoken directly to his dead wife, the highly personal material of household memories and deep feeling for once thrusts Chapin's conventional discursiveness to one side, forming a natural style in which fondness and grief find perfect pitch. As he says elsewhere: "Joy is the gift of courage." Sometimes, too, Chapin has a delicious trick of implying his faith in a living God by casually personalizing nature:

No fault of mine, white Gomer decks  
the hedge  
or silvery dew refreshes (read sword)  
Someone set it going, wound up small  
to loop the air

But despite his long narrative efforts and broad Whitmanesque gestures, the overall effect of Chapin's selected poems is that of an occasional, if not amateur approach to poetry. This is as it should be.



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the fields of science. The relation of reason and moral value to imagination, however, is not completely clarified. Perhaps it was easier for Gerard to give intuitive reason to imagination because he was already an intuitionist. For others it would not be so easy.

From the outset in Wolff and Baumgarten, the German approach to imagination was more systematic than the British, and this tendency was reinforced as it became a central issue in the critical philosophy. The Leibnizian tradition also played a large role in German criticism. The imagination "works through poetry to present a sensuous imitation of the transcendental and spiritual worlds in general", summarizes Engell. "This produces a 'higher' sense that goes beyond visible nature and comes face to face with the forces and essences of nature." Imagination unlocks the treasures of the Indic, Egyptian, Greek and Nordic mythologies, interprets folk cultures, and grasps the spirit behind the symbol-laden language of the Bible. And it could create a new mythology. In 1793, Karl Philipp Moritz wrote that imagination seeks to render higher essences "as individualized as possible"; it transfers spiritual powers to "beings now represented as actual and to these are attributed the birth, names, genealogy, and form of men".

Engell finds pivotal the writings of Johann Nicolaus Tetens, who exerted a potent influence on Kant and Coleridge. For Tetens the imagination had three distinct levels: direct perception; representation of images, like the memory, but with the capacity to alter them; and *Dichtkraft*, which, according to Tetens, "dissolves and blends images, separates and draws them together, and creates new forms and appearances". Even the slightest imagination seems to drop on its way into the place in the finished whole. Tetens was concerned with the question of the will, which he solved by a kind of paradox. A genius wills the formation of his work yet he feels himself in the grip of some immense controlling power, part of the Will of another, as Coleridge would write. How did this super-talented otherwise come into existence? The artist cannot fully understand the process because conscious powers are only a part of it. But it feels like an irresistible passion and nothing is stronger than the will. Thus, deliberate planning unites with the deepest unknown forces of one's being. What and where were these unconscious powers? In mind alone, or in nature too, and God? Was there a vantage-point from which to view and judge of the rules governing the whole? For, after the organized artistic fact, there did seem to be rules. The search was on for a larger philosophy to explain the operation of these powers.

If there were rules for genius, Kant said, we would all be geniuses. His many contributions to imagination extended over forty-five years. The general trend of his thinking was to grant more and more to it, combining the findings of the British empirical philosophers with the transcendental motives of Leibniz and his followers. Engell likens this effort to building a tunnel through a granite mountain.

from the side of the categories and the postulated *Ding-an-Sich*, the side of formal intuition; the transcendental and a priori rules of time and space; the productive imagination starts to hand into the mountain, destined to reach the other side of phenomena and experience. Meanwhile, from the empirical side, the reproductive imagination sets out in the opposite direction, struggling to cut through to the goal of understanding.

"At times," Kant believed that imagination could coordinate this effort. In the *Opus postumum* he gave to artistic genius the power of *Gefühl* itself, the principle of animation of upward movement through ideas.

After Kant, ideas on imagination spread out like fire. Not a year passed in the 1790s without an important book or essay on the subject. Schelling said imagination was the wings of the soul, the faculty of vision

higher state. For Blake and Schelling it was the vehicle of religious salvation. In the *Letters on the Advancement of Humanity* Herder identified the "human ideal" innate in mankind; poets and artists nourished its realization. The imagination was no longer just a faculty or power. It was a way of life.

But this is only half the story. Chapters on Blake, Wordsworth, Shelley, Goethe and Keats tell how the creative imagination figures in their efforts to fulfil the very ideals it set for them. The book concludes with Coleridge's attempt to synthesize his Dynamical Philosophy with the Triunity; more on this subject will emerge when Engell publishes his edition of the *Biographia Literaria* (with W. J. Bate) later this year.

The relation of eighteenth-century criticism on imagination to the Romantic achievement prompts several reflections. First, the critics opened the way for Romanticism. They accomplished this end by arguing themselves forward, out of corners, dead-ends and eddies across a century. The very object of their endeavour was their inspiration, and their curiosity was matched by intellectual courage. How they did this, what fostered and hindered them, so admirably chronicled here, amounts to a moral lesson for criticism at any time: by their fruits shall ye know them.

Second, one notes the manner in which they translated concepts of imagination into other dimensions. Psychologically, the imagination reconciles diverse powers and faculties (Gerard, Tetens, Priestley). Religiously, this reconciling power was linked to a "Mittelpunkt" (Herder, Coleridge) symbolizing the creative force of Christ who united God, man, and nature; or a visionary moment in and out of time, where past and future were gathered up (Wordsworth). Philosophically, it was a "Mittelpunkt" (Schiller) or "Indifferenzpunkt" (Schelling) between poles of contrary forces. Aesthetically, it was "the power by which one image or feeling is made to modify many others, and by a sort of fusion to force many into one" (Coleridge). The idea cuts across many fields. Herder's and Schelling's positions now seem more remote, one can still reach a true understanding of them by starting out on the appropriate parallel corridor.

Finally, when Sulzer said that imagination, not memory, was the mother of the fine arts, he did not mean to cut off the past by a simple notion of originality. The major Romantics supported this position. One of the chief uses of imagination had always been to connect, to translate, to synthesize. One could not connect what one had cast aside.

## Transindividually speaking

By Christopher Norris

MARY EVANS:  
Lucien Goldmann  
An introduction  
165pp. Brighton: Harvester. £15.95.  
0 7108 0067 3

This book opens with a modest disclaimer: "a brief introduction... not an intellectual biography" and will certainly not be accused of exceeding its brief. In such a short span it can do little more than summarize Lucien Goldmann's ideas, sketch in the outline of an intellectual background (notably the influence of Lukács), and gesture towards some of the problems encountered in his work. Mary Evans's book is unlikely to create any new star of interest among readers not yet familiar with Goldmann's writing. As an "introduction" it lacks the communicative flair and enthusiasm needed to win converts. On the other hand it spends too much time on dogged exposition to spark off any fresh or productive line of debate. Ironically, its one good effect may be to remind memories of Goldmann's achievement among those who responded to his work before his premature death in 1970 (along with the subsequent vagaries of structuralist fashion) cut short his growing reputation.

It is a negative virtue of Evans's approach that she largely ignores the hothouse climate of literary theory which has tended to pass Goldmann by as a "primitive" structuralist hopelessly captive to his own conceptual metaphors. Deconstruction has given rise to a deep suspicion of methodology, like Goldmann's, which clings to "structure" as some kind of refuge of thought. Adepts like Barthes abandoned the quest for a structuralist "science" of the text, and took to treating their own early work as a dalliance with methods which could only fetter or stifle the verdant pleasures of reading. Goldmann's brand of genetic structuralism seems to belong to that stiff, theoretical regime, a model which set up the social unconscious (or "transindividual subject") as a uniform means of explanation.

Marxist critics were equally at odds with Goldmann's working assumptions. From an Althusserian standpoint his approach has been stigmatized as insufficiently dialectical, as lacking a due sense of complex mediation and ultimately pointing to

an "ahistorical" plenitude of lived experience. Goldmann's defenders have mostly been critics of a strongly empirical or sociological bent, willing to bypass such uneasy issues of theory. The most notable exception, Raymond Williams, has looked to him mainly as a moderating voice against the rigours and militant anti-humanism of Marxist thinking in the past decade.

With the waning of Althusser's influence it may be that Goldmann — like his mentor Lukács — is due for reassessment. Whatever its theoretical shortcomings, *The Hidden God* was a striking and persuasive work which did much to justify the tension of structuralist methods to complex readings of historical and cultural understanding. Goldmann no doubt suffered from the kind of boiled-down critical treatment which heralded the arrival of "structuralism" in the late 1960s. Going back to his work one is struck not only by the breadth of historical research but by the scrupulous deployment of theory in the service of detailed interpretation. Certainly there is a danger of excessive schematization in the series of homologies which Goldmann detects between Jansenist religion, social displacement (the *ouïssance de robe*) and the writings of Racine and Pascal. But it is a danger which Goldmann was fully aware of, and which he managed to avoid — in this book at least — by a sensitive regard for the checks and resistances put up by his material.

More telling is the criticism that Goldmann's method works as well as it does in *The Hidden God* only by virtue of a curious kinship, or elective affinity, between topic and treatment. The *deus obscurus* of Jansenist theology might well be seen as an analogue — indeed an unconscious projection — of the structuralist emphasis on lost origins and meanings deferred by the endless play of signification. As with Derride's critique of the "transcendental signified" in Western philosophy, the gesture of denial seems very ill-suited to the task of dispelling very illusion which it seeks to dispel. All theories of course have their temperamental home-ground, and Goldmann's readings are by no means invalidated by this sense of an exceptional "fit" between theme and theory.

But his methods are much less convincing when he moves outside the socio-cultural ambience of seventeenth-century France and applies them (for instance) to Kantian philosophy or the *nouveau roman*. Goldmann reads Kant as a "tragic"

philosopher, one in whom a dialectic of enlightenment (striving for the unity of subject and object, thought and action) is forced into passive and unfulfilled by the backward political condition of Germany. This view of dialectics as presenting a special, historical kind of "tragic" thought is among the most original and suggestive of Goldmann's ideas. At the same time it invites the charge (from Marxist and more orthodox Kantians alike) that Goldmann has taken the world-view of a different time and place, and transposed it as if "tragic" awareness of all such attempts to negotiate the problem of knowledge. Kant becomes, with Pascal and Racine, a protagonist in the same long drama of thwarted aspirations.

Mary Evans finds relatively little to criticize in Goldmann's work on Kant, though she does bring out the limitations of his writing on Racine and later French fiction. In general her book is not so much concerned with interpretative problems in Goldmann's work as with tracing its political development (mainly by reference to Lukács) and explaining the causes of his later quarrel with neo-orthodox forms of Marxism. She has some useful things to say about Goldmann's increasing hostility towards Soviet communism, his estrangement from Marxist-revolutionary themes and his espousal of the view that change could only come about within the areas of freedom opened up by an advanced technological society. Her criticisms here are sharply focused and argued on firm historical and sociological ground. All the more evident by contrast is her tendency simply to repeat and paraphrase Goldmann's own arguments, reserving her critique for the generalized discussion of his later political views. Evans says clearly enough the problems raised by Goldmann's loose distinction between a "repressive" stage of monopoly capitalism and an "acceptable" market economy, the latter somehow promoting freedom and emancipated consciousness. It is unfortunate that her analysis of Goldmann's critical writing is nowhere conducted at the same level of clarity and vigour.

The book has more than its share of misprints, solecisms and grammatical lapses, along with such painful contortions as "the possibility of the possible disappearance of a specifically proletarian culture". At least its appearance is a welcome indication that Goldmann's work is back on the agenda for serious discussion.

## The family philosophy

By Christopher Thorne

R. F. HOLLAND:  
Britain and the Commonwealth Alliance  
390pp. Macmillan. £20.  
0 333 27295 1

What is the essence of the Commonwealth? What principles and purposes are attached to it? How did it come to develop out of Britain's Empire, and in what direction is it evolving still? The vigorous answers to such questions recently supplied by Mr Muldoon, when he was responding to charges levelled against New Zealand over the South African rugby tour, serve as a reminder that, whatever else it may or may not be, the Commonwealth is a dimension in a rich topic for debate and disagreement. Gibbon, one feels, would have enjoyed composing a few inimitable footnotes on the subject, not least concerning the myths which it has tended to become enmeshed in. Numerous school textbooks have depicted the development of the Commonwealth in the years before the Second World War as a natural and harmonious process. The Dominions, so such versions run, had their childhood solemnly recognized in the Balfour Declaration of 1926 and by the Statute of Westminster of 1931, thereafter (with the exception of the Irish Free State and some reluctance on the part of Hertzog's South Africa) advancing shoulder-to-shoulder with Britain towards the trials of strength with Germany, Italy and Japan. Its commercial ties strengthened as a result of the 1932 Ottawa Conference, its awareness of its own unique character made keen by the wisdom of Smuts, the "family" represented the planned fulfilment of Britain's philosophy of empire.

Comfortable images and assumptions of this kind were to contribute in the post-1945 period to the belief that the Commonwealth could provide the means by which Britain, though now dwarfed by the United States and the Soviet Union, could retain her position as a Great Power; that the Commonwealth constituted one of the "three circles" within which Britain's international policies were to be formulated. And yet, concealed from the general gaze in Britain itself by the reawakened contribution of the Dominions on the field of battle, Commonwealth relations during the war years had been subject to considerable strain. For those who cared to see it, the issues raised between 1939 and 1945 were such as to call to question both the association's future strength on the international scene, and the more comfortable and romantic versions of its pre-war history. The need for protection from Japan's advance in 1942 emphasized the hollow nature of Britain's assurances, repeated as late as 1959, that the Royal Navy could and would do the job. It also pointed ahead towards the ANZUS Pact of 1951, the absence of Britain from which was so to anger Churchill. Or again, the increasing likelihood that independence would be granted to India soon after the war raised an even more significant question: how the Commonwealth would fare if and when it lost its existing character as a fraternity of white peoples in a white-dominated world.

A realistic examination of Inter-war Commonwealth relations, then, is a prerequisite for any appreciation of what was to follow, while it can also contribute to an understanding of Britain's troubled experiences on the international level after 1918. R. F. Holland's study is helpful in these respects. Originally a doctoral thesis, it puts its themes across clearly, and the author has a happy knack of coming up with a nicely turned sentence when summing up a particular aspect of his subject. Thus, of the Dominions Office around 1930 he observes that it had "become the prisoner of a revolving conundrum whereby Dominion nationalism was always appeased in order to facilitate cooperation, whilst cooperative in-

initiatives were always rejected for fear of stimulating Dominion nationalism".

Dr Holland begins with the premise that it was only in the mid-1920s, "when Britain's post-1918 problems became clear", and "the mass phenomena of Empire" (exhibitions, days of celebration, and the like) manifested themselves, that "a Commonwealth 'system' came to exist". One could argue over certain elements contained within this assertion, and some readers may be puzzled to read a little further on that "there was not a Commonwealth system any more than there was an international system". (Holland's meaning is that the "system" existed only as a political concept, not in reality.) The ensuing argument, however, is a convincing one: that the Commonwealth's dimension appeared to provide inter-war Britain with one means of halting her relative decline, internationally speaking, and that the arguments which surrounded the association, both among its constituent governments and within Whitehall, need to be seen in that light. Put in the simplest terms, what this meant was that, whereas for various reasons individual Dominions were reluctant to bind themselves in such a way as to become involved in a renewed European war, these reasons were being used to ensure that, if such a war should come, Dominion assistance could be relied upon. Concessions might have to be made to Dominion susceptibilities in other spheres, but not in this matter of Britain's international position and, possibly, very survival.

This central concern for Britain's power and security was shared by Leopold Amery. In the tradition of Milner, however, he went much further than most politicians and officials in London in his crusading vision of what could be achieved on a Commonwealth basis, and in his attempts (not least as a means of outflanking the Foreign Office) to bring the Dominions into the British policy-making process. The establishment of a separate Dominions Office was a step in this direction. More significant still was the success of Amery and others in bringing to the fore the possibility of adopting some form of Commonwealth trade strategy as a means of restoring Britain's prosperity and preserving her room for manoeuvre vis-à-vis those more blessed with raw materials and a large domestic market.

Amery's vision was incapable of being realized. Not for the last time, he argued his case with great persistence and at great length, but on the basis of equally great misconceptions. (In 1944-45, when Keynes was striving to bring home to ministers and the public the magnitude of the country's financial vulnerability, Amery was convinced that as a result of the huge sterling balances which other countries had piled up, the pound sterling would be widely cherished, and that hence Britain possessed "an almost unlimited gold mine in its [Treasury] printing press".) There were, obviously, sufficient common sentiments and perceived common interests among Commonwealth states to give their association continued meaning. And, on the negative side, Holland brings out, for example, the anti-American element that was involved. In the final reckoning, however, certain prominent features of the inter-war international scene, together with the politicization of Commonwealth issues within Britain and the Dominions, set severe limits to what the association could achieve as a distinct entity in world affairs.

Within each of the member states, a variety of considerations worked against any absolute commitment to Commonwealth solidarity. In London, for example, as Holland demonstrates throughout the book, the priority given by the Foreign Office to international developments in Europe, together with its desire not to be embroiled in its dealings with others with the separate preoccupations of the Dominions, frequently brought it to oppose the submissions of the Dominions Office, more concerned for Commonwealth feelings.

Nor, for the most part, did British politicians and officials appreciate the particular regional interests and ambitions that were developing in Canberra and other Dominion capitals, just as there existed among all Commonwealth members what Holland terms "a remarkable ignorance of and insensitivity towards each other".

Misunderstandings and difficulties of this kind could no doubt have been reduced, at least, by the governments and peoples concerned. But other obstacles to the development of a closely-knit Commonwealth "system" were beyond any such control, being woven into the fabric of the current international political, economic and strategic scene. Faced with the continuing possibility of a renewed conflict within Europe, her worldwide interests far exceeding her means of upholding them, Britain could no more base her policies on Commonwealth considerations alone than she could concentrate exclusively on upholding the League of Nations. Nor, despite her assurances to the contrary, was she in a position to protect Australia and New Zealand should she be faced simultaneously with major assaults in Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Far East. In such circumstances, what Holland calls "an essentially 'political' view of the Commonwealth" began to emerge in London. "Increasingly," he adds, "Commonwealth was not perceived as an absolute value worth preserving at almost any price, but a political relationship the utility of which depended on the terms of its operation. It was, in short, negotiable." When Britain did act in a way which accorded with the preferences of a majority of the Dominions, as over Czechoslovakia in 1938, she did so because she saw her own interests as thus being served, not as a concession to Commonwealth pressures.

Meanwhile, international realities had likewise nullified Amery's hope that, on the basis of the diverse but complementary economic roles of its members, the Commonwealth could become a closely-knit and largely self-sufficient commercial and financial unit. In the event, and especially after 1929, the terms and patterns of world trade were such that the interests of primary producers like Australia and Canada were far re-

moved from those of an industrial producer like Britain. The Mother Country could not provide the expanded market urgently needed by the former; the Dominions, for their part, as demonstrated by the Ottawa Agreement of 1932, were not prepared to grant substantial preferences to British exporters. Nor was the financial strength of Britain any longer sufficient to offset the growing attraction of the United States as a source of investments and credits, while as her population grew, too, fell away. Empire migration schemes took on an unchronistic look. The Commonwealth that did, even so, join Britain in the fight for her very existence in 1939 remained a remarkable association of states in several respects; but it bore little resemblance to the political entity that Joseph Chamberlain, Milner, and after them Amery had envisaged and striven for.

In setting forth his persuasive overall analysis, Holland (who misquotes one of the present reviewer's own judgments) offers some particular opinions which are open to question. Does it convey the essence of Britain's attitude, for example, to describe Locarno as the point at which she "recognised a responsibility to police West European stability" (italics added)? Was the French stance vis-à-vis Germany during the Rhineland crisis an "assertive" one? Does it do justice to the sources of support for the League of Nations within New Zealand to ascribe that country's arguments at Geneva on behalf of the victims of fascist aggression in the 1930s to the fact that she was herself "a small and vulnerable state"?

Dr Holland has also chosen to concentrate to a large degree upon the Dominions Office and its relations with other bodies in Whitehall. The result is that he sets limits to his study which at times call in question the suitability of the word "Britain" in its title. He does not explore, for example, the private business connections between Britain and Australia, with individuals such as W. S. Robinson (of Broken Hill mining, amongst other enterprises) and his friend Oliver Lyttelton receiving no mention. No attention has been paid to press sources, either, or to the relevant discussions that took place

within the Royal Institute of International Affairs. Not only have the unpublished papers of this last body been ignored, but so, too, it seems, have those of such pertinent figures as Austen Chamberlain, Lord Chatfield, Stanley Baldwin, Lord Latham, Lord Beaverbrook, Lord Halifax, and Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith (who, as Minister of Agriculture, was much concerned with Commonwealth farming problems). While use has been made of Stephen Koskill's line study of Hunkley, the latter's papers have not been consulted. Stranger still, no reference is made either to the published papers of Smuts or to Sir Alan Watt's works on the beginnings of Australian diplomacy.

Moreover, it is arguable that the author could have made a more significant contribution to Commonwealth studies had he extended the scope of his original doctoral work before issuing his findings in book form. Even if it had remained impossible for him to reach overseas archives in order to avail himself of, for example, the papers of Lord Bruce of Melbourne, he could from British sources alone have carried his examination beyond 1939, to say, 1942-43. So many of the issues which were raised in the inter-war years (relations with the United States; the inserting of Dominions views into Whitehall discussions; the need, as perceived in London, to obtain greater Dominion support for Britain's colonial policies; and many more) were to come to a head during the war, that the cut-off point of September 1939, so obvious in some ways, may not have been the most appropriate one for the subject under discussion.

In short, Holland has provided a well-argued and persuasive study which contributes to our understanding of both Britain's inter-war policies and the development of the Commonwealth in general. Even on its own terms, however, the book is not quite as good as it should have been; nor is it as weighty as it might have been, with another couple of years' work. One puts it down, grateful but also somewhat disappointed — reactions which a good many have experienced concerning the Commonwealth itself over the years.

## Far from shipshape

By Bryan Ranft

ALAN EREIRA:  
The Invergordon Mutiny  
172pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.  
£5.95.  
0 7100 0930 5

In his preface Alan Ereira, in refreshing contrast to the dust-jacket's absurd claim that "up till now little of the story has been known", describes his book as not a definitive history of the Invergordon Mutiny but on account of what men who were there believed took place. This limited aim was dictated by the material used which, when it is not based on already published work or primary documentary sources, consists largely of the responses of nearly a hundred participants to requests for information from which Mr Ereira constructed a radio programme to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the mutiny. The actual events of September 1931 — the government's decision to reduce sailors' pay as part of a drive to stabilize a crumbling financial situation, the clumsiness with which the Admiralty handled the publication of the decision, and the disturbances which followed in the ships at Invergordon — were clearly established and analysed in Stephen Roskill's *Naval Policy Between the Wars*, Volume 2 (1976). His mastery of the subject not only presents a closely documented narrative but also a trenchant analysis of the weaknesses of previous published work. But even Roskill admits that some details, for instance of what

took place at the meetings in the canteen ashore where the discontent with the pay cuts rose to the surface and grew into a determination to resist them, can never be fully understood because they can only be based on recollections recorded many years afterwards. The same can be said of the impossibility of establishing precisely what happened in the individual ships during the mutiny and who, if any, of the men constituted an identifiable leadership.

Ereira and his team of researchers have not overcome this inevitable handicap. Recollections of what happened to boys and young men fifty years ago, in circumstances of confusion which themselves must have made it difficult for participants to know what was happening, cannot be a firm foundation for accurate historical reconstruction. Although the author comments on this from time to time, he gradually builds up the general impression that, despite all the inconsistencies and improbabilities, he is producing an accurate version of what happened. The difficulty in assessing this claim is increased by the fact that he does not always clearly indicate whether his quotations are from oral or written testimony, and some are not attributed at all.

Ereira's one new documentary discovery, which he calls "startling", is a reference among Admiral Dreyer's papers to Admiralty discussions of the use of force against the mutineers. It was inevitable that such action should be considered, but unfortunately Ereira fails to show how seriously it was contemplated and what ideas there were on how it

could have been implemented by some more realistic method than the bombardment by howitzers he does mention.

The evidence which Ereira has discovered, with its sometimes penetrating simplicity, does produce an impressionistic insight into the frustration, anger and confusion of men who, as he perceptively observes, were attempting the impossible, "an act of loyal disobedience... the attempt to take illegal action without breaking the bounds of legitimacy". It must have made an excellent radio programme but is of little help in clarifying the historical record.

Denis Brook-Hart's *20th Century British Maritime Painting* (382pp. Antique Collector's Club, Church Street, Woodbridge, Suffolk. £25. 0 902028 90 1) is at once a history, an anthology and a reference book on its subject. Sixteen chapters describe the historical background and the successive periods of maritime art in this century and country, the characteristics and techniques — media, palette, element use, etchings and prints — collecting marine art and its market values, and the Royal Society of Marine Artists. There are nearly three hundred photographic reproductions, thirty-eight of them in colour, with detailed captions; and finally a biographical index section on over 650 artists, ranging from Sir Mulholland Bone and Sir Frank Brangwyn to Rodney J. Burn, David Cobbe, Roy Cross, Charles Dixon, Richard Eulich, Derek Gardner, Royland Hilder, L. S. Lowry, Kenneth Macdonald, Keith Shackleton, Terence Storer, W. Eric Thorp and Edward Wesson.

## Captain Marsh

Captain Marsh has gone to work to a locked room on the second floor. He is not pleased by steps approaching.

We are close enough. Listen, he types with two fingers and barks at mistakes as if at insolent cablo-boys.

All winter he is marooned here by his own orders. An electric fire and a whisky-bottle are his comforts.

He has not spoken to us in months though sometimes notes escape the room, requesting steak or lamb-curry.

Nights when we can't sleep, we hear the clacking of his machine far up disturbing the pigeons on the rooftop.

What is his great vocation? Who will he reveal this late crop, this surge that has replaced the sea?

We ask, make crude guesses, laugh. Sometimes we wait outside the room as he walks the boards as if in pain.

Matthew Sweeney

## In all directions

By Lachlan Mackinnon

PAUL HERNADI (Editor):  
What is Criticism?  
321pp. Indiana University Press.  
£10.50.  
0 253 37733 1

The question is, as the twenty-three contributors agree, essentially unanswerable. What they offer instead is a series of tentative emphases, whose extreme points are the radical subjectivism of Stanley Fish on the one hand and, on the other, Wayne Booth's call for ethical and political criticisms as well as a revival of the higher journalism. Booth, in his demand for a criticism open to more than merely literary responsibilities, offers a way out of the dilemma into which Fish hopes further to drive us, but not a wholly satisfactory one. Murray Krieger raises the question absent in both cases, that of the canon.

Criticism's place is unproblematic when there is an agreed canon to be expounded. However, the last canon, Eliot's, is now in complete disarray and has been replaced by a plethora of syllabuses. As Mary Pratt reminds us, criticism has withdrawn to the academy; and become what Richard Ohmann describes as a self-sustaining industry within a society

which appears not to need it, a laissez-faire circuit which masks the fight for tenure. The idea that literature may actually matter largely begging here — there is not a Leavisite in the house. The dissolution of the canon is accompanied by forces of which some contributors confess themselves already tired, forces which dissolve the ideas both of the author and of his authority.

A canon is a way of defining the present; we are that to which it leads. In literature, this means that the canon is responsible to contemporary work in an interplay between influence and redirection. There does not appear to be a writer in English who commands the authority which embodies and/or invents a canon, and in that absence critics are left with a past which makes it increasingly less sense to them. The debate in this volume is intelligent and informative, but it will be concluded only by a fiat sounded in literature itself.

*Spatial Form in Narrative*, edited by Jeffrey R. Smith and Ann Douglas (280pp. Cornell University Press. £13.75. 0 8014 1375 3), contains an introduction and nine essays, including a retrospective one by Professor Joseph Frank himself, exploring the theory that has developed in relation especially to narrative language and structure, and to reader perception. Since Frank's influential 1945 study, *Spatial Form in Modern Literature*



# The impartial infidel

By F. W. Zimmermann

IGNAZ GOLDZIEHER:  
Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law  
Translated by Andreas and Ruth Hamori  
302pp. Princeton University Press.  
£13.10 (paperback, £5.75).  
0 691 07257 4

*Vorlesungen über den Islam* (1910) is one of the major classics which Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921) contributed to the academic study of Islamic studies, a subject he did more than anyone else to establish. The book was first designed as a course of lectures (which he never delivered) for a non-specialist American audience. Its object is to survey the history of the religion of Islam. This is accomplished with an admirable combination of erudition, lucidity, and balanced judgment. It still provides an exemplary outline of the subject-matter of Islamic studies. "As a guide," says Bernard Lewis in his introduction, "to Muslim faith, law, doctrine and devotion, at once comprehensive and documented, Goldziher's lectures remain without equal." The English title is far too narrow.

Professor Lewis's introduction gives a succinct account of the book's history, but strikes a jarring note when it comes to what the author describes as "discussing the lectures as a product of their time". What we are told is that Goldziher was less silly than today's Islamists (an observation which would be less powerful if it weren't so self-vindicating), and that he was a Jew. Lewis contrasts the "calm and open" manner of his approach to such issues as the authorship of the Koran and foreign influence on Islamic scripture and tradition with the "anxious propitiation" of "modern scholars", which "has made their discussion of such topics cautious and insincere." Admittedly such caution has recently been much in evidence. It is silly for Islamists to think that Muslims will have more respect for a dishonest infidel than for an honest one; silly for Muslims to accuse western scholars of perpetuating medieval traditions of calumny (when their methods plainly derive from those unsparingly developed by Christians in the study of their own tradition); and silly for Lewis to suggest that Goldziher's work is dated by its sincerity.

## Continuing it on

By B. M. Bolton

DAVID L. EDWARDS:  
Christian England:  
Its Story to the Reformation  
351pp. Collins. £7.95.  
0 00 213212 6

It is appropriate that an Anglican clergyman, now Dean of Norwich, should produce a book that is something of a church's "age". Indeed, David L. Edwards himself acknowledges the book's shortcomings in his preface, although it is doubtful whether he expects to be taken seriously. He claims, with justice, that no other book covers the field in the same way, for it takes in a wide sweep of history from Roman Britain to the Henrician Reformation. The work is aimed, at the general reader, but it would need a mind capable of cross-referencing to pick up some of the rich interferences which appear throughout. *Christian England* is based on up-to-date scholarship and contains an impressive bibliography of recent scholarly books and articles, but the reader is not helped by any reference to them in the text.

Edwards states aim is to assess the English church in the heritage of those centuries when, as he says, "the church was a living organism".

English is spoken but English culture is distant. By which he means, I presume, that this is to be a broad history of the Church of England for Anglican communities overseas. However commendable this aim may be, such an approach is disturbing. Somehow all the events following the arrival of Christianity in Roman Britain are seen as leading to the continuation of an Anglican Church after the Protestant Reformation. There is, of course, a strong element of such continuity in ecclesiastical history for England, or the British Isles, was part of one Christian community, part of one Church which was Catholic. Thus when we find Edwards making statements such as that "Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* was the work of a man who was very much a Roman Catholic" it is hard to understand the point he wishes to establish. There were no Roman Catholics in the eighth century, nor even in the fifteenth, there were only members of one Church throughout Europe, called Catholics.

Perhaps, meant that Bede in his Northumbrian context looked more to Roman than to Celtic Christianity but the general reader could be misled by so slick a statement.

I would not wish to be over-harsh about this book. It is sure to attract by its historical sweep and, though obviously based on wide reading, it would have been more persuasive if it had been more careful in its approach.

then emerging; what had gone before became rapidly obsolete and, consequently, was either adapted or forgotten.

The significance of Shāfi'i has since been emphasized by Schacht (*The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, Oxford, 1950), but this has made too little impression. Some of the inevitable shortcomings of Goldziher's work have thus become bad habits among Islamists. The most striking example is the now esoteric flowerpot model of the formative period of Islam, according to which a bulbous Koran was implanted, two centuries deep, into the (strangely fallow) soil of the Middle East. We know the Koran, and we see the intertwining foliages of the authentic plant and sundry weeds, sprung up from a residue of hidden seeds, as they emerge into the sunshine of the third (= ninth) century. All we have to do is to distinguish plant from weeds and trace them separately to

## The deity at a distance

By Robert Hayward

JOHN ARMSTRONG:  
The Idea of Holiness and the Humane Response  
A study of the concept of holiness and its social consequences  
177pp. Allen and Unwin. £8.50.  
0 04 200042 4

The medieval Church displayed an inhumanity towards the poor and underprivileged which is quite at variance with the humanitarian concerns of Jesus, because it inherited from the Hebrews the essentially inhuman idea of holiness, and from the Greeks an equally callous rationalist intellectualism. The Church Fathers used these two "psychic" systems into a "sacralist" theology which placed humanitarianism in the background and devalued their harsh legacy to the Middle Ages. This, in brief, is the thesis of John Armstrong's book.

The author describes holiness in terms of a "psychic centralism" characterized by gods whose main attributes are self-aggrandizement and the will to power. Israel's fanatical grasping after territorial gain is reflected in the personality of her God, a blustering bully whose holiness, and consequently his distance from ordinary human nature, increases throughout the Old Testament period.

A sacralism harnessed to producing strength and potency, in order to win territory and greatness, was bound eventually to grow more ambitious, yielding to the flattering dream of world conquest. At the same time, the idea of the Holy One demanded that mankind should be one in acknowledging him. . . . And thus was born Hebrew Universalism. Essentially, it is a colossal power fantasy; with all the arrogant impatience that goes with these indulgences; that red and softened a little at times by thin benevolent [sic] overtones, and the thought of peace.

The very opposite of holiness is blessing, which is bound up with fertility and prosperity in nature. It operates through "the full and free functioning of the whole psyche", and is prominent in the Patriarchal narratives and the books of Hosea and Jonah, which testify to an "organic" approach to life, defined as "a human system which ensures that the human mind totally, fully functions as 'whole' and a cherishing by man of his bond kinship with the rest of living nature. . . . Sacralism and the 'organic' are opposites; sacralism triumphs in the end, Jesus was 'the last and most wonderful flowering of the Hebrew mind's organic underside', but the Fathers, like the Jews, preferred holiness to blessing.

Next comes a grim catalogue of the humanitarian failings of the medieval Church. Even when it acted to relieve poverty, Dr. Arm-

strong asserts, it was not motivated by humanitarian altruism, but by a scheme in which suffering was seen through the rose-tinted spectacles of theology rather than in its harsh actuality.

The Old Testament, Greek poets and philosophers, the Sumerians, Milton, Blake, the Church Fathers, and medieval authors are all cited in support of his case. The material is wide-ranging; but it is the biblical evidence which is crucial. In the presentation of this there is no meticulous analysis of the uses of "holiness" and "blessing". Such analysis is absolutely essential, because the Hebrew Bible has no single concept of holiness and blessing; rather, it uses these and related words in differing senses in its various literary strata. Unfortunately, Dr. Armstrong's work discusses holiness and blessing only in general terms. The picture of the Holy God as the source and bestower of blessing, so common in the Bible, is played down. The nearness of God, as when he is revealed to Moses on holy ground, is ignored. There is no mention of God whose name is holy and who dwells in the holy place and looks on the contrite and humble to revive them (Isaiah 57:15); nor of the God of Ezekiel 16:39, who punishes Sodom for her pride, luxury and failure to observe humanitarian standards in sustaining the poor and needy.

Further, Dr. Armstrong has failed to meet the challenge of the Old Testament on its own ground. If holiness testifies to God's distance from, and blessing to his nearness to man, the Old Testament is posing the basic theological problem of how God's transcendence should be related to his immanence. But our author firmly refuses to take up this problem, and substitutes for transcendence and immanence his own notions of "psychic centralism", "organic approach" and "sacralism".

We can proclaim an impossible feat of contradictory thinking and feeling to be possible; through a mysterious compatibility of what conflicts, for instance by juggling with theological terms and concepts more manipulable than human nature, such as transcendence and immanence. The history of thought is full of such poignant woolly compromises, whereby men who desperately want to have something both ways persuade themselves that it can be done. And the impossibility of giving a full and simultaneous welcome to sacralist and organic images is rooted in a more fundamental one, namely that of wholly embracing two opposed psychologies at the same time.

In this way centuries of Jewish and Christian scholarship are cast aside, and with them any serious attempt to tackle complex and basic theological problems. Dr. Armstrong isolates holiness and blessing, ignoring the fact that the Old Testament does not speak of them in a vacuum. God's

"aristotelisches Mittelmaß" (known in English as Aristotle's mean). Goldziher's references have been verified and brought up to date. There are additional notes, comments and references to his own work, vacillating between excess and defect. The comments to Goldziher make an important contribution to the study of the notion of "liberal" as understood with intolerance or repression, by irritating to find Goldziher's ownness adulterated with such irrelevancy. If I part company with my own old German copy of the *Vorlesungen*, it is because the English version is more convenient to use than the footnotes at the bottom of the page, and there is an excellent bibliography of works cited (though under Jüli, Naṣir al-Dīn (d. 1210) has been conflated with Abū Jābir (d. 1067)).

The two stories and the autobiographical fragment which constitute this book were written between 1944 and 1950. In other words, they date from the era of the genesis and development of the Gruppe 47, of which the late Alfred Andersch was an architect, and which represented the point of departure for much that was good in the new, post-war German literature. Only the title-story was published during the author's lifetime, however, and then in a newspaper serialization. The reader familiar with Andersch's work will recognize certain themes, motifs and even individual passages - to some extent the volume consists, of "raw material" which Andersch employed elsewhere. It needs to be added at once that the book can be read independently of Andersch's other works.

The first tale, *Heimatfront*, reads like a version of the elegiac *Cadenza Finale* which Andersch included in his collection of stories, *Geister und Leute* (1958). *Heimatfront*, however, not only records a soldier's failure to find his lover during a snatched visit - the story of *Cadenza Finale* - but elaborates an unexpected sequel of casual though not tawdry consolation afforded by a second woman. By acting as an unwilling courier the hero participates in the resistance to Hitler, and this represents a further involvement, only sketchily paralleled in *Cadenza Finale*. However, interesting the supplementary material may be, Andersch was right to

not essentially cognate and compatible, mainly as both representing forms of pure centralism, are rarely expressed and enforced by lofty and unorthodox moralising or presiding god, but also through secondary common features of excellence, a haughty and masterful distancing of nature, and the sin of hubristic offence, which justifies and enlarges a public delict.

It is no coincidence that we hear only of Antiochus IV's attempt to abolish Judaism, but virtually nothing of the Jewish battle against Hellenism which followed. More seriously, Dr. Armstrong ignores post-biblical Judaism and its theology of holiness altogether.

We may grant that ancient and medieval man lacked the benefits of twentieth-century (or eighteenth-century) liberal humanitarianism. But is it not ill-advised to judge past generations by standards of which they themselves knew nothing, and to explain their social attitudes and patterns of behaviour, which were surely infinitely more complex than this book allows, by reference to the simplistic scheme which Dr. Armstrong proposes?

In the end, there is something deeply disturbing about this book. The passages quoted are fairly typical of its tone, style and attitude. It is to be hoped that those who know the Old Testament or Judaism will not misconstrue Dr. Armstrong's remarks, but will return to the primary sources for a truer perspective. And speaking of humanitarianism, was it not the Jewish sage Hillel who summed up the biblical and non-biblical aspects of Judaism when he said to prospective converts: "What you do not wish to have done to you do not do to your neighbour." This is the whole of the Law; the rest is explanation of it. Go and learn (Babylonian Talmud *Shabbat* 31a).

POSTAGE: INLAND 15p. AIRMAIL 25p. ORDER FORMS AND BOOKS, NEW YORK, NY 10011.

## Deserters of the fin-de-guerre

By Colin Russ

ALFRED ANDERSCH:  
Flucht in Etrurien  
200pp. Zürich: Diogenes.  
3 257 01613 6

The two stories and the autobiographical fragment which constitute this book were written between 1944 and 1950. In other words, they date from the era of the genesis and development of the Gruppe 47, of which the late Alfred Andersch was an architect, and which represented the point of departure for much that was good in the new, post-war German literature. Only the title-story was published during the author's lifetime, however, and then in a newspaper serialization. The reader familiar with Andersch's work will recognize certain themes, motifs and even individual passages - to some extent the volume consists, of "raw material" which Andersch employed elsewhere. It needs to be added at once that the book can be read independently of Andersch's other works.

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## Apocalypse precinct

By David Profumo

STEPHEN PETERS:  
The Park Is Mine  
305pp. Blond and Briggs. £6.95.  
0 8534 122 3

A man moves through Central Park one night on a private mission. He telephones the police to inform them that he is about to blow up their Precinct Headquarters. There, then take control of the surrounding nine hundred acres. At first they scoff, but, as the week progresses, and they discover that he has turned the area into a network of booby-traps and bizarre fortifications, the story moves from the dimension of a television thriller towards an engrossing and disturbing study of a man's war with his past experience.

Harris, the man who annexes the park, has managed over the course of many stealthy months to smuggle 19,000 dollars' worth of specialized military hardware into the place, securing his awesome arsenal in a disguised aqueduct and assorted subterranean niches. He begins his operation by detonating explosions around the perimeter of the park to cause panic and confusion; as he speeds between locations on a specially altered motorcycle, the amazed metropolitan authorities assume a group of terrorists must be staging a protest.

But Harris is no terrorist or fanatic. He is a veteran of the Vietnam war, whose traumatic memories of active combat have caused him to lead a "parallel life" in his mind: some of the time, he is still in South-East Asia. He has re-created overnight a miniature jungle infested with concertina wire, claymore mines, punj-sticks and a central fire-base, complete with grenades and automatic weapons. In a disastrous first assault, the police are massacred. Expert advisers subsequently advocate a helicopter, and even an M-48 tank, but Harris copes with it

prefer the shrill *Cadenza Finale* for publication at the time. It distils perfectly his unsentimental awareness of the interplay of war and human relationships which has been a subtext of much German literature since 1945.

Werner Rott, the central character of *Heimatfront*, reappears in the second story, *Flucht in Etrurien*. Clearly Andersch's self-portrait, he may be "equated" with Franz Kien, the figure who recurs in a handful of stories drawn from episodes in Andersch's own life and whom the author regarded as his alter ego. The account of Werner's desertion from the German forces in Italy during the last war extensively coincides with that of Andersch's own desertion, published in 1952 in the autobiography *Die Kirschen der Freiheit* (these four words form the last phrase in the text of *Flucht in Etrurien*). Andersch regarded this act as the turning-point of his life. It is interesting to find a major desertion in this writer's work is unusually complex. It may help to cite a recent statement by Frau Andersch to the effect that her husband had no companion when he deserted. The invention of the second deserter in *Flucht in Etrurien* was surely motivated by Andersch's interest in the resulting configuration, in which Werner and a third soldier try respectively to encourage and to weaken his will to desert. Against the secret and lonely

decision in *Die Kirschen der Freiheit*, we are here shown an issue which divides a small group of German soldiers trapped in the *fin de guerre*.

The proximity of truth and invention is further reflected in the juxtaposition, or interrelation, of the (juxtaposition with the book's final piece, *Amerikaner-Erster Eindruck*, in which the author steps forward in his own person. This autobiographical fragment reads as a continuation of the story, in that it portrays Andersch's own surrender to the Americans in Italy after his desertion (it therefore also provides a postscript to *Die Kirschen der Freiheit*, while at the same time having some material in common with that work). Andersch has written elsewhere of the congenial "golden cage" in which he found himself as a prisoner-of-war: the impact of America, where he was taken, and of American democracy was profound. In this fragment, he recalls his first impressions of his captors, and of being driven by them through a Rome familiar to him from peacetime - his nostalgia now chromed with a controlled lyricism, which frequently colours Andersch's early prose.

Andersch died in 1980. It is good to be reminded by this book of his psychological insight, his mastery of natural description, and his ability to show that great historical processes of politics and war, far from being "impersonal", are very personal indeed. Not long before his death, he was expressing bewildered pleasure at the knowledge that his literary papers were safely in archivists' hands. It is to be hoped that further posthumous publications will follow *Flucht in Etrurien* which, in any case, does not "round off" Andersch's work but on the contrary should open windows on it for many readers.

This is part of his point: how little we know of people. Wallace-Crabbe himself weighs in more than once to explain that people have no fixed personality, and that it is the particular treachery of the novel to make us think they do. "Acquaintances change their partners or fall off after exorbitant objects in ways that your storyteller - even Miss Murdoch, indeed - would shy away from; seeking to hold on to some principle of coherence." Most readers will realize this already; and Wallace-Crabbe's intrusion, which serves to make points about both the novel and life, is somewhat *visus* *visus*. It is an assertion of authorial cleverness which is not wholly supported by his performance in the rest of the book, with its lack

of Harris's mind. On his return from the jungle he became a pariah; he finds that he misses the grotesque drama of Vietnam, and needs to re-create his experience and resolve them; "I'm telling you, this war was in colour", he says to Weaver. Concern about the treatment of veterans has increased during the last year, it is true, but it was not until 1980 that this mental condition was finally recognized by the American Psychiatric Association, under the name of "post-traumatic stress disorder"; the veterans knew it as "looking for Charlie", the lingering need to engage an enemy. As Harris's dream of Vietnam materializes and he confronts the Viet-Cong again, Peters frames a distressing image of modern America.

A conference on the subject of "Selling literature", organized by the English Department of the Rochester Institute, will be held on Thursday February 11 and Friday February 12 (both days: 9.30am-5.30pm) in the Main Hall, Whitehead College, West Hill, London SW15 3SN. The admission fee for the two days of the conference is £2; and the programme will include talks by Christopher Ricks ("Bob Dylan and the 'Ransom'"), Isabel Armstrong ("Conrad for Sale"), Jim Grealy ("Literature in Secondary Education"), John Sutherland ("The Bestseller: an American Kind of Book?"), David Trotter ("Models for the Identification of an Avant-Garde Readership: from Political Party to Academy"), and Peter Scott ("Selling Language"). Further details available from the English Department Secretary, Southlands College, Parkside, Wimbledon, London SW19 3NN.

There are few explicitly political statements; the facts of the crisis suggest the truth. One example speaks with depressing staidness: the opponents of Harris consult Dr. Warburton, a specimen from a think-

## Changing partners

By Alan Hollinghurst

CHRIS WALLACE-CRABBE:  
Splinters  
182pp. Rigby.  
0 7270 1435 8

In *Splinters*, his first novel, Chris Wallace-Crabbe has attempted a difficult thing, a slice of life whose plan is of necessity a kind of planlessness. Set in Melbourne, Australia, the book takes a passing look at the more or less unifying lives of a large number of characters; but the interconnectedness of these lives does not form any pattern, and the randomness of existence is unredeemed by artistic form. Instead there is a strategic randomness about the way it is presented: the book's achievement is constantly to fend off the liberation and calm which would result from the author expounding a numinous unifying idea. If any idea does underpin it, it is in fact chaos: "Underneath us all the abyss, the gap, the toothed mouthful of horror, the O."

*Splinters* repeatedly recalls Mrs. Dalloway. Wallace-Crabbe's writing is more ordinary than Virginia Woolf's, but he, as Woolf did, uses a city as a system and a background against which characters worry about the meaning of life and the idea of the self, and look for connections between discrete events - a party and a man jumping to his death from a window among them. Unlike Woolf, however, he does not invest his people with that vagueness of treatment which implies significance; his handling of scenes is much more sharply detailed, and largely unshaded by pathos. There is a cold feel to the book, a sense that the author does not really care for his characters and is unwilling either to protect them or to let us get to know them.

This is part of his point: how little we know of people. Wallace-Crabbe himself weighs in more than once to explain that people have no fixed personality, and that it is the particular treachery of the novel to make us think they do. "Acquaintances change their partners or fall off after exorbitant objects in ways that your storyteller - even Miss Murdoch, indeed - would shy away from; seeking to hold on to some principle of coherence." Most readers will realize this already; and Wallace-Crabbe's intrusion, which serves to make points about both the novel and life, is somewhat *visus* *visus*. It is an assertion of authorial cleverness which is not wholly supported by his performance in the rest of the book, with its lack

## Criminal proceedings

By T. J. Blynon

ALAN HUNTER:  
Fields of Heathen  
158pp. Constable. £5.95.  
0 09 464400 4

Chief Superintendent Gently goes back to his native East Anglia when a man's body is found in a gorse thicket on a common near the Suffolk coast. It turns out to be very much a family affair, and Gently - after acquiring a French wife, more like Maigret than ever - puts quietly away at his pipe and waits for the problem to fall apart under its own weight. Pleasantly thick atmosphere and a good plot, borrowed in part from a famous but distant predecessor. The debt is acknowledged.

TIM HEALD:  
Masterstroke  
168pp. Hutchinson. £6.95.  
0 09 146760 8

Simon Bognor, Tim Heald's bungling Board of Trade Inspector, is sent down to Oxford to investigate the murder of the Master of his former College. Half-picked as usual, Bog-

of coherence and narrative drive. And when a character displays "what a novelist would have called 'a wry smile'", the implicit suggestion that this novelist is above cliché and glibness is misleading.

A more disconcerting feature of the writing is a tendency to "poetic" usage. People drift through the "crepuscule" and feel moisture which is the "harbinger of dew". Home is "that ambiguous tundra" and domestic insecurity gets even worse when "there was carbon steel in her voice". It would have cut through walls of adamant. When told that "a covert of darkness lies as thick as corporate experience", one feels entitled to wonder just how thick that might be; if it is a covert presumable not very. At other times Wallace-Crabbe mixes metaphors like a cocktail-barrman: "Garry she liked, while recognizing that he remained to some extent raw, malleable, or unlicked - but not foral. This made him a bit of an unknown quantity, something of a quack, a little dangerous because cloudy and uncharted."

There are other things which remain cloudy and uncharted in this ambitious book. It is set at the time of the invasion of Czechoslovakia, of the Vietnam War and *Sargeant Pepper*: a time of LSD, wall-posters and chilled claret. Little is made of this historical placing. Immense issues surround its fashion-swayed central events, which are often approached with the keenness of satire, although no overall satirical vision emerges, partly perhaps because Wallace-Crabbe has no belief in a just society which might replace it all. Admittedly the book has a cogency and sense of value, revealed through idiom which, beyond a general sense of Poms and poofers, can remain obscure to an English reader. Often it is like being nudged in the ribs but not being sure what one is supposed to be mocking or admiring; this gives the deliberate opacity of the treatment a further and unintended uncertainty.

Overall, however, the scheme of interlocking but unrelated subjective dramas is a daring one for a first novel; few writers are prepared to forgo from the start the comforts of traditional form. But Wallace-Crabbe has also neglected to learn the discipline. The fragmented, essentially modernist approach cannot appeal or compel unless it shows a greater investment of sympathy and passion than is evident here. Wallace-Crabbe's detachment may be another part of his policy of disaffection with novelistic traditions, but it is one which threatens our very interest in the material through which he has chosen to exercise it.

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0 09 146760 8

Simon Bognor, Tim Heald's bungling Board of Trade Inspector, is sent down to Oxford to investigate the murder of the Master of his former College. Half-picked as usual, Bog-

nor picks a clumsy path between amoral businessmen, homosexual schoolteachers and Oxford's answer to the Cambridge Burgess, Maclean and Philby set. Amusing and effective, with some neat touches - and a number of in-jokes. Perhaps a trifle sentimental about Oxford, and more than a trifle out-of-date about its traffic system: no motor-bicycle, not even one ridden by a beautiful English down in designer jeans and thighhigh leather boots, can speed unimpeded down the Cornmarket.

ROBERT LITTELL:  
The Amateur  
252pp. Jonathan Cape. £6.50.  
0 224 01937 6

Charlie Heller, ace CIA cryptologist who spends his spare time trying to prove that "Bacon" wrote Shakespeare, crosses illegally into Czechoslovakia to take revenge on the three terrorists who have murdered his girl-friend. This is a stylishly written, cleverly plotted thriller with impressive background detail. But, as it progresses, the novel gradually loses its hold on reality, simultaneously turning from tragedy into farce. And Robert Littell's liking for sentimental whinny is as marked as in his previous books.